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**Three politicians
answer nine key
questions**

**Curaçao's Setel
trying harder**

**US-Antillean
relations**

Rising Crime

**The economic
importance of
small business**

**Pre-columbian
times**



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FROM THE EDITOR

Once more the country is readying itself for general elections. The third time in four years. To some this constitutes proof that the democratic process is very much alive in the Antilles. And, no doubt, it is. Be it, as everywhere else, to a certain extent and constantly endangered from within. But true as that may be it should first of all be remembered that the Netherlands Antilles belong to that very small family of nations in which constitutional democracy functions. To quote Dr. Henry Kissinger: "the reality is that constitutional democracy, which we consider 'normal' is, in fact, a rarity both in the sweep of history and on the breadth of this planet". The question then is whether we should consider it 'normal' or cherish it as a most precious possession.

To speak of democracy as a possession does not give proper due to the concept. Essentially it is rooted in an attitude which a nation as a whole and its citizens individually have to attain time and again. An attitude of respect for the freedom of the individual and of concern for the common good or in a more abstract sense for the constitution which is meant to

guarantee both. Such lofty words, however, need translation into political reality. Democracy has to be lived.

The phenomenon of a relatively large number of parties contending for the voter's favour is in this respect not encouraging. Besides causing a spread of competence, which a small country cannot permit itself, it indicates an inability to practise and allow opposition within the existing parties. As a result the people are not given a choice between programmes but between contending groups of politicians. A dangerous development as it can easily lead to investing authority in personalities.

The inevitable disappointment of large numbers with the political system provides fertile ground for those who propagate government by 'the people'. An attractive slogan, which in fact means only one thing: the growth of state power exercised by a small ideological elite. And as the people can never oppress itself, that power soon becomes absolute.

Awareness of weaknesses and dangers should motivate the electorate to exercise its voting right in a responsible manner. With a view to the democratic tradition of the Antilles there needs to be no doubt that common sense will again prevail.

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Antillean languages and the judiciary

The Antillen Review of February/March 1982 carried a most controversial article written by Mr. W. Luiten on "Law and Language", which contained from the very beginning to the very end a number of contradictions and allegations which do call for clarification.

To begin with, Mr. W. Luiten wrongly states that part of the educational policy report deals with the regulation of the language situation in the Netherlands Antilles. This statement in itself is a clear indication that Mr. W. Luiten had not read or even seen the provisional draft of the educational policy report. For if he had, he would have noticed that said draft report was written by the committee which was charged with setting up a policy to restructure the educational system in the Netherlands Antilles. Mr. Luiten would have also seen that nowhere in this report was mention made of regulating the language situation in the Netherlands Antilles.

There is indeed a separate draft report on regulating the language situation in the Netherlands Antilles drawn up by the Linguistic Institute at the end of last year.

This report titled: "Aanzet tot reguleren van de Antilliaanse Taalsituatie" (Towards the Regularisation of the Antillean Language Situation) was disseminated among various institutions which were requested to comment on it. The basic proposal contained therein was the recognition of both English and Papiamentu as official languages alongside Dutch.

Mr. Luiten who mentions only Papiamentu as the language proposed for official recognition, therefore, either blatantly disregarded this document in his article or was completely ignorant of it or perhaps, more likely, ill-digested this and the previously mentioned draft report on Educational Policy (De Beleidsnota:

"Education for one and all").

For a start, he admits the need for the official recognition of Papiamentu yet, he wastes no time to state categorically that "nothing else but Dutch" can be used within our judiciary. He acknowledges the "emancipating" functions of such official recognition but declares, without hesitation, that "it must be absolutely ruled out that we would be able to build a legal science that is entirely our own". He further asserts that abandoning Dutch "will destabilize our legal and governmental system", yet proposes that "a system other than the Dutch one could be adopted and adjusted to our own circumstances."

Suffice it to add just another example in this catalogue of contradictions. Mr. Luiten, who probably is in the legal profession, admits that a foreign physician or a teacher coming to work in Curaçao may be required to function in Papiamentu. But why does he rule out such a requirement for a jurist?

What underlies all these contradictions? Fear! Fear seems to be the key to Mr. Luiten's distortion of facts. The fear of the Dutch language being eventually abandoned in favour of Papiamentu and English. However, and this is most significant, nowhere in either of the two relevant draft policy reports is there any proposal to eliminate Dutch as official language. The only relevant document in this regard is the one submitted by the Linguistic Institute which recommends the official recognition of English and Papiamentu next to Dutch. Thus, instead of Dutch alone being the official language of the Netherlands Antilles, English and Papiamentu would also become official languages.

The proposal to have three instead of one official language cannot certainly be so frightening. It would only mean translating into law what is to a great extent already the linguistic si-

tuation of the Netherlands Antilles.

Canada, Switzerland, and several other countries in the world, notwithstanding their current stage of socio-economic development, have more than one official language.

In his confusion, Mr. Luiten ignorantly considers the terms "legal system" and "legal science" to be synonymous, and consequently, equates the language used in the judiciary to the legal system. This is obviously wrong. Any language could be used in a legal system, even where the laws are not written in that language. Conversely, any set of laws can be translated into any language.

It is, in fact, appropriate to ask, at this point, what kind of justice can be expected if the people do not understand the language in which their laws are written?

Mr. Luiten's article clearly and meticulously omits any mention of the Dutch Windward Islands. However, it would seem that in his view, the judiciary should use Dutch to the exclusion of English on these islands, where — as a matter of fact — English generally functions as official language. Striking is also Mr. Luiten's fake identification with the Antilles, which is revealed in his constant switch between the use of "they" in . . . "therefore they have to continue being linked to another legal system", and "we" as in the sentence: "It must be absolutely ruled out that we would be able to build up a legal science that is entirely our own". In both cases he is referring to the Netherlands Antilles. Of course, Mr. Luiten may not be an "expert" in linguistic or language problems. That alone could explain why he could not have addressed himself to such crucial language issues in any scientific manner.

Drs. L. Richardson
Linguistic Institute
of the Department of Education.

Nine Key Questions

With a view to the upcoming elections AR invited leading politicians to write down their answers to nine key questions. The replies of mr. Augustin Diaz, mr. Juancho Evertsz and mr. Don Martina are printed underneath.

Future Status

A change in the relationship between the Netherlands Antilles and Holland and between the respective islands seems by now inevitable.

It is felt by many that in the ongoing debate most politicians react to what others say rather than come forward with their own vision.

1. Could you state briefly but clearly your party's views with regard to the future relationship with Holland and what you see as the ideal with regard to the relationship between your island and the other five?
2. In order to prepare for the future status as envisaged by your party, what specific measures of preparation should be taken and how much time would you allow for that purpose?
3. With a view to the above and the developments in the region (East-West confrontation) are you satisfied with the present arrangement by which the Crown takes charge of foreign policy or do you envisage an increasingly active role in this respect by the Antilles themselves, and what position does your party take with regard to the mentioned confrontation?



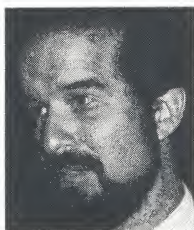
Evertsz

Maintaining the existing political structure is one of the few solutions our party sees at the moment. The relation between the islands, however, has to be reviewed without delay and especially Aruba has to

clearly define its standpoint. It is evident that independence at this moment is not feasible. It would be ideal, if the six islands were to stay together. However, it has become quite clear that this is impossible as a result of the Aruban attitude. In the event that Aruba withdraws from the Antilles it will be financially impossible for Curaçao to bear the burden of the other four islands alone.

2.

Our party gives priority to the strengthening of our economic base over political independence. Furthermore it goes without saying that if Aruba wishes to step out of the Antillean Union it has to do this as soon as possible, thus enabling Curaçao to start functioning more effectively in adopting resolutions to broaden the social-economic base. Specific measures: the immediate creation of an entity to further broaden and go on guiding financial, social-economic and social-cultural development in accordance with the report drawn up by the 'Gemengde Commissie'. In this entity should as far as possible be



Diaz

The Democratic Party envisages that ultimately the present political relation with Holland will have to be substituted by a relationship based on international law, which implies an independent Antilles

consisting of six islands. If, however, one of the islands e.g. Aruba decides for a different kind of political status (i.e. outside the Antillean Union) the DP will respect this desire.

The DP does not preclude the possibility of an independent Antilles consisting of five islands. Only in the last instance does the DP opt for an independent Curaçao. The Party is of the opinion that the relations between the islands as they exist now within the Netherlands Antilles should continue, but in such a way that each of the islands is granted the greatest possible independence. If Aruba decides to leave the union, the DP feels that Holland should take care of all the financial consequences for Curaçao.

2.

The realization of an independent Antilles will have to be preceded by preparing the people mentally; objective information followed by a referendum; measures to promote an as large as possible economic independence and clear arrangements concerning



Martina

MAN aims at the creation of a new 'Antillen' on the basis of voluntary participation of each island presently belonging to the Netherlands Antillean Union. Sovereignty of the Antilles must

be preceded by an agreement about the political structure of the islands in which mutual co-operation is arranged. The new structure of co-operation, in which a limited number of common interests will be taken care of centrally, must prove that it functions well in practice and therefore must be granted some time.

2.

In the coming period much attention will have to be devoted to promoting a greater sense of solidarity, self-reliance and regional awareness as well as willingness to build our own future and take responsibility. First the findings of the Committee of Seven have to be awaited and after having been informed properly about these, the population will have to speak its mind by way of a referendum. Considering the above it is evident that in this stage it is impossible to indicate when and how the islands will be able to realize their self-termination.

included representatives of all the social partners and disciplines on the various islands.

3.

It should in the first place be mentioned that not only the developments in the East-West confrontation are at issue here, but also the North-South dialogue. It is important for us that Holland takes care of our foreign relations, because this requires so much qualified personnel and money that we will not be able to bear the burden. The The Hague-Willemstad co-operation should in this respect, however, become a two way traffic. Because of the Antilles' acquaintance with the existing mentality in this region the Crown's foreign policy with regard to the region and South America should clearly bear the Antillean stamp. With regard to the East-West confrontation we are clearly in favour of the Western democracies. ■

external defence, foreign affairs, sea frontiers, debts to Holland, continued participation in the EEC, continued aid from the EEC and from Holland, the financing of a social-economic strategy for the Antilles. This will take a long time. The DP cannot at this point fix a date on which all the conditions mentioned will have been fulfilled.

3.

The Antilles should have a say in the decision-making policy of the Crown regarding foreign affairs. With regard to our region the Antilles should create their own policy. Concerning the confrontation now taking place in the South Atlantic the DP shares the views of the Caribbean Council of Churches that all war zones must immediately be declared a peace zone. Moreover the right of self-determination should always be respected. ■

3.

At the moment the Caribbean is once again one of the focal points of the East-West perspective. One of the great dangers of institutionalisation of the cold war is that every internal change is interpreted as expansion of a super power and not as the reflection of the real problem i.e. the struggle against poverty, underdevelopment and injustice. Therefore this struggle is not placed in the real dimension of the North-South problem.

The bipolar character of the East-West vision hinders the process of democratization of the international process by the implication of a rigid hierarchy that prevents a real participation for new states. In the Caribbean, which sets much store by ideological pluralism, this may cause a historical step backwards.

As regards our foreign policy: MAN is of the opinion that the establishment of an autonomous diplomacy, characterized by dynamism, initiative and effectivity has to be strived for. ■

Economy

One of the most serious problems facing the country as a whole and several islands in particular is the high rate of unemployment.

In order to keep the economy afloat and to create more labour opportunities local and foreign investment is urgently needed.

1. In what measure does your party welcome foreign investors and which specific facilities and guarantees are you prepared to offer them?
2. Are you of opinion that the so-called 'dismissal law' serves the interests of both employees and employers in a satisfactory way (which is often doubted by prospective investors) or do you favour a different approach?
3. How do you propose to deal with the red tape and inefficiency which apparently often discourage investors interested in the Antilles?

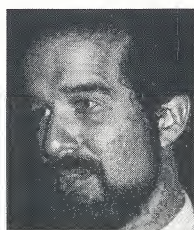


Evertsz

The measures we envisage are

- a. a shorter procedure to obtain a licence to establish an enterprise and speed up the procedure to obtain other licences.
- b. review the fiscal laws in order to stimulate enterprises in general with a special emphasis on the off-shore sector
- c. provide industry halls
- d. expand free zones
- e. provide investment deduction.

2. We are in favour of a new approach to the dismissal law in particular with regard to its implementation. An inventory of what has been achieved on the labour market as well as with regard to management should be conducted. It is already clear that the dismissal procedure should be shortened. ◆

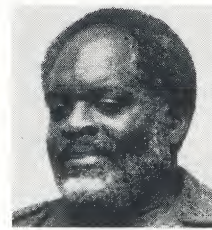


Diaz

As the Antilles are in a very vulnerable position it goes without saying that we will do our utmost to broaden the economic base and to carry out a policy aimed at the recovery of confidence in our

economy. In order to do so we will:

- a. promote far-reaching decentralisation of the powers to the islands territories to ensure political stability.
- b. continue with the reorganisation of the government services in consultation with the labour unions.
- c. carry out such a policy that there can be no doubt about legal security.
- d. avoid too much interference in the private sector.
- e. introduce on short term new stimulating measures (e.g. fiscal concessions) both for new and existing enterprises. ◆



Martina

In view of the relatively high level of unemployment in our country and especially in Curaçao during the last 20 years, we are convinced that the solution

of this problem can only be found through a joint effort between all governments and all Ministries and Departments of the Netherlands Antilles together with private initiatives and investments from local and foreign sources.

The contribution of foreign investors to his effort is not only welcome but very necessary both now and in the future.

To this end the M.A.N.-party has already given full support to private local and foreign initiatives while practising in the last government. ◆



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3. Our party favours the establishment of one body per island territory to handle requests and issue permits. This body must be enabled to establish direct contact with the departments and enterprises concerned and offer its advice directly to the responsible policy-maker. ■

2. The D.P. is of the opinion that the dismissal law should be upheld as it is now. Concerning the implementation, however, we feel that a decision of the director of Social Affairs should be taken within six weeks after a request for dismissal has been submitted. Moreover, we have the impression that many employers have a wrong conception of this law due to insufficient information about its nature. We are convinced that speeding up the process and informing employers better will take away much of the existing aversion, which in turn will help to improve our investment climate.

3. To improve on the so-called red-tape situation a body will have to be created in consultation with the island territories, which will have as its task to speed up the handling of requests by potential investors. ■

Most important however is the fact that we fully realise that one of the most crucial elements affecting the investment climate is the assurance of a stable political climate.

We will continue to create the necessary general climate that will not only attract investors but also offer the assurance of being in a safe investment harbour.

More specifically the M.A.N. will do its utmost to

- promote political stability
- continue strengthening the antillean guild and promote a favourable development of the balance of payments
- make the necessary changes and modernize our fiscal legislation
- interest foreign investors in our economy
- give the necessary protection to local products

2. The dismissal law was construed in order to serve both the interests of employers and employees.

Its functioning however was not optimal owing to a lack of clear instructions to the organs in charge of its application.

The Martina Government has already taken the necessary steps to instruct the Director of the Ministry of Labour to speed up the decision making by this officer.

This being the main objection heard against this law we hope that its application will now cause less reason for dissatisfaction. We will, however, continue monitoring this development and make any adaptations that may be necessary in the future. ■

The Next Generation

The younger generations constitute more than 50% of our population.

For many young people the chances to find suitable employment look dim.

Reports by government and private institutions speak of a resulting process of demoralisation and a frightening loss of values among people, in particular the young. It is generally agreed that this negative process can only be stopped and reversed by a thorough overhaul of the educational process.

1. How does your party see the role of government and of private initiative in this respect? Please indicate scope and limits in particular of the government's role both with regard to education and general remotivation.
2. It is often maintained that we should arrive at an 'indigeneous' educational system. If you agree, what do you specifically mean by 'indigeneous' in this context?
3. What measures has your party in mind to tackle the problem of youth unemployment and the resulting process of demoralisation?



Evertsz

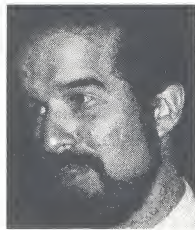
Vocational training must be expanded to more disciplines. In addition several re-education projects must be initiated based on the existing demand in the labour market. A programme for 'on the job

training' in industry subsidized by the government must be started. In this the government has a correcting and implementing task and has to act as stimulator to private initiative. Education should remain free for all groups in the community and should be of constant concern to the government. The latter should further support plans of the Council of Churches to promote a civics sense via the courses in social sciences.

2. The NVP considers education as one of the most important welfare provisions and as one of the means to eliminate social, cultural and economic under-development. We are of the opinion that education is both a means and an aim to increase economic self-reliance of the individual without detracting from the general christian values of the community. Our educational system should prepare the population for independence. It must also be a reflection of our own values. We believe that freedom of education should be maintained unabridged. Every individual should be given the opportunity to receive the education which corresponds with his abilities and religious convictions.

He should be allowed a responsible measure of influence on the system. We favour a system which will produce responsible, critical and creative citizens. We also hold that vocational training should be geared better to the needs of industry.

3. The Antillean Development Brigade project should be executed immediately. Adult education should be broadened in scope in order to enable many more young persons



Diaz

Article 140 of the "Staatsregeling van de Nederlandse Antillen" states that education should be a subject of constant care of the government. It is the task of the government to rule, regulate and di-

rect education in this country.

Whenever there is a consensus that our educational system needs a thorough overhauling, the government should investigate and compare, and offer alternatives and solutions.

Private initiative in our educational system is recognized and protected by laws in the above mentioned "Staatsregeling". However, private initiative cannot occupy an autonomous position in our educational system. It should follow always the direction which is decided by the government and implement its decisions loyally.

Nevertheless, private initiative should always function as a counterpart to the government in the role of initiator of new ideas and intercede on behalf of minorities it sometimes represents.

2. Indigeneous in this context means that our educational system should be based on the fulfillment of the needs and necessities of our specific Curaçaoan community.

Before one is able to fulfill those needs, one should know what those needs are in reality. Those needs should not be restricted only as to, for instance, which language the lessons should be taught in, but the whole of the complexity of our community should be investigated and studied.

It would then be possible to have an idea as to what form an "indigeneous" system should have.

3 The needs of our community should be known, and hence the education and in-



Martina

The interaction between government and private initiative should be characterized by participation of organized private initiative in preparing and executing government policies. This will

broaden the democratic dimension of our society.

With regard to general remotivation our party strongly believes that the actions of government should promote respect, discipline and the upholding of desired norms and values. The behaviour of the elected both in his personal and political life is of great influence on the belief of the electorate in our democratic values and on its willingness to co-operate towards upholding these.

With respect to education the authorities should honour and guarantee the right to information by creating and maintaining conditions serving this principle.

The relation between government and private initiative is in our community regulated by the basic rights of freedom of expression and freedom of education as laid down in the constitution. Both freedoms imply the rejection of any kind of discrimination.

2. The present educational system contributes both from an individual-psychological and a social point of view in no small measure to the process of demoralisation in our society. The almost complete want of appreciation of our own language and culture leads to estrangement of the individual from his own socio-cultural environment. Thus irreparable damage is done to the self-confidence of a large part of the younger generations.

The much needed indigeneous educational system should take as its starting point the child as it is with its own socio-cultural background. This implies the use of the

to learn a profession. We are against an over-accentuation of the intellectual aspect. A proper balance with other aspects of the human personality should be aimed at. ■

struction should be given to fulfill those needs. Professions, for which there is no employment, should not be taught in our technical schools.

On the other hand, skills which can guarantee an income, whether as a self-supporting citizen or as an employee, should be taught. Much more attention should be given to "on the job training" projects, as a means to introduce unexperienced youngsters in an employee-situation, as well as to upgrade unskilled and half-skilled personnel. The A.O.B. project should be initiated as a means to motivate, train and teach self-discipline to youngsters.

To employ trained people, jobs must be created however.

Incentives should be accorded therefore to those that wish to bring industries on the island; tourism should be promoted in all ways possible. As a red line through all these and other activities should run a motivation process which is the most important part of the business of getting a job and keeping it. Self-reliance should be propagated, pride in one's honest work, professionalism, citizenship, productivity, and the feeling that one is part of the whole. ■

child's mother tongue in education besides teaching other world languages to keep an opening to the world at large. It also implies that knowledge and love for our own cultural heritage should be promoted.

3. Besides the general measures demanded by the unemployment problem we envisage a youth-labour project for which the island authorities should be responsible. The national government could provide the necessary funds for the project, which might promote the beautifying of landscape, improving living conditions and creating recreational facilities.

Our unemployment problem is characterized by both a surplus and a shortage of labour. Special measures are needed to alleviate the shortage of trained executives. These could be:

- to try and reverse the trend to leave school too early.
- to provide scholarships both for employed and unemployed young people.
- to create possibilities of schooling, additional training and re-education.

Finally long term planning e.g. family planning should be developed in order to diminish the labour supply. ■

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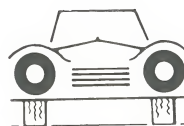


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Constitutional deliberations nearing crucial stage

Second meeting of committee of seven sets agenda

Reactions to the April meeting of the Committee of Seven discussing options for the constitutional future of the Antillean islands were mostly of the nature of *déjà vu*. Preceded by years of debate, scores of position papers and a fair number of high level meetings between Holland and the Antilles, all of which yielded little tangible result, the meeting could hardly be expected to rouse much interest. In particular as most of the deliberations went on behind closed doors and the committee's work is of a preliminary nature anyhow. But now that more details of the four day long discussions have leaked their way out, it does not seem an overstatement to suggest that the gathering in cold and windy The Hague may well prove to have been of a decisive nature. So much seems clear: Aruba is going to have its desired 'status aparte' soon. Only a serious financial crisis or regional ramifications of the Falkland crisis could change the envisaged re-alignment of constitutional ties between the islands and with Holland. But even though such developments may very well occur, it is clear that the present constitution linking the Antilles and Holland as two partners in one Kingdom has run its course.

Fresh Start

When the four Antillean and three Dutch members of the Committee sat down last April to continue their discussions — a first meeting took place last February in Curaçao — the agenda at least was clear. Holland's proposal at the earlier session to broaden the committee's charge i.e. to study besides the feasibility of Aruban independence and the consequences thereof for the other islands also possible constitutional options for the latter, had in the meantime been turned down by the Crown after a strong protest by the delegates from Bonaire, Curaçao and the Windward Islands. It now seems plausible to suspect that the Dutch put forward their proposal hoping to use Aruba's desire for partial independence as a leverage to force their own ideas on all the six islands. The Dutch would like the six to stay together be it in a less centralized set-up than the present one. Thus they

would ward off the possibility of being saddled with one or more of the islands indefinitely.

Their ploy having failed, they now appeared eager to have done with the January discussions and instead insisted that the Committee should proceed from a paper which in the meantime had been drawn up by Aruba. The meeting concurred.

Association

The most significant part of the Aruban paper concerned the proposal to grant the second largest island as regards population the status of association with the Netherlands. To arrive at this end, the Arubans suggested, a period of pre-association should precede during which the necessary process of decentralizing government services could take place. It should be noted that such a period would also allow Aruba's leading party (MEP) to continue creating situa-

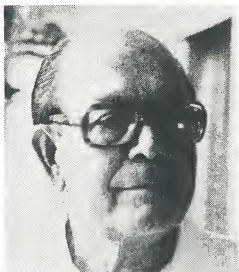
tions of conflict, a method by which it has managed in the past to stay in power. This pre-association phase would be ended with the enactment of two legal acts effected almost simultaneously: immediately after receiving its independence Aruba would relinquish certain prerogatives like external defence and foreign affairs.

One implication, not much to the liking of the Dutch, is that full independence would then become a matter of the distant future.

Time table

The Dutch had prepared themselves thoroughly. During the deliberations they produced a list of the problems which will arise if 'association' is decided upon. They also put on the table an outline of the constitutional changes required to grant Aruba 'status aparte'. It soon became clear that Holland was ready to move in the latter direction. This did put the Aru- ♦

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ban member of the Committee, Mr. Hendrik Croes, on the spot, as his party MEP prefers association while the general opinion in Aruba favours status aparte. The main difference between the two options is that status aparte does allow for the definite fixing of a date on which full independence will have to come about.

In accordance the chairman of the Committee, Mr. Barend Biesheuvel, a former Dutch prime-minister, spoke of a six year limit. One high placed official, however, conceded that this might be extended to ten years. The Dutch also suggested that decentralization of government should be completed within six months in order to preclude any constitutional ambiguity during the transition period.

Obstacle

If all this seemed to go unexpectedly smooth the Dutch (and non-Aruban) members of the Committee, however, still had a card up their sleeves. Any change in the constitutional ties, they insisted, can only be arrived at if all parties concerned agree to a clearly defined measure of substantial and lasting cooperation. This pre-condition may well prove to be a serious obstacle during future negotiations. The Arubans have hitherto defined future cooperation with the other five islands in less than minimal terms. In essence they only want collaboration in those fields where they suspect that Aruba might lose by not doing so. Apart from sharing uniform and concordant legislation they do not want to partake in any kind of structural cooperation.

At the next meeting of the Committee, which is expected to be held soon after the summer, the other members will forward their definition of 'substantial and lasting cooperation'. There is no doubt that Aruba will then come under heavy pressure. The

other Antillean members are not prepared to go along unless a satisfactory measure of cooperation is agreed upon and guaranteed.

Holland has already stipulated that this should at least be of the nature of that which exists among the members of the European Community.

Geopolitics

In the meantime a number of experts have been invited by the committee to draw up papers outlining the administrative, financial and geo-political implications of the intended re-alignment of constitutional ties. With regard to the last issue the Falkland crisis will certainly not fail to have its influence. Nearby Venezuela, which sided wholeheartedly with Argentina, has during the past two months made it quite clear that it considers the ABC islands to be very much within its sphere of influence. Developments unwelcome to Caracas will not be tolerated.

A recent backing down by Washington and The Hague with regard to naval exercises near Aruba after a protest by Venezuela, indicates that the vested interest of the latter country in the Antillean leewards is being recognized if not officially then in the international corridors of power. A development which should make Antillean politicians extremely prudent with regard to unraveling the existing national fabric. They will at least have to exert from Holland the assurance that it will continue to take charge of external defence. That in turn provides The Hague with a strong edge in the next rounds of negotiations.

Debacle

Disquieting is the reported expectation of Dutch politicians that the Antilles are heading for

a financial debacle. The soaring costs of a much too large administrative body and the threatening loss of substantial income caused by America's intransigent attitude towards the offshore activities based in the Antilles, have given rise to this gloomy prediction. Decentralisation of government will only add to that unbearable burden.

Even more worrisome is the information from usually reliable sources that Holland will not lift a finger to help Willemstad out of its expected predicament. Although there is some fear that such a development might lead to social unrest on Curaçao, which already faces a serious unemployment problem, the advantage of a further edge in the negotiations is said to be preferred. But whether this would re-open the possibility of keeping all six islands together seems doubtful.

Crucial

Aruba will certainly not be willing to make an about-face even if this implies the unavoidability of full scale independence. The Windward Islands have already let it be known that they will opt for direct ties with Holland, if the present constellation collapses. Holland has indicated its willingness to go along. Ironically such a turn of events would then mean that Curaçao and Bonaire are going to get what Aruba has been demanding for years: indefinite constitutional ties with Holland.

Although the Committee of Seven has been set up to advise the respective governments of Holland and the Antilles with a view to the next Round Table Conference, it may be concluded that its findings have already brought the constitutional deliberations to a crucial stage. ■



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"Creating a library for tomorrow, not just a depot of books but a place where the world of the young and of the adults will meet, a sort of play-ground of communication". Alice van Romondt, the dynamic director of Aruba's Public Library, searches for words to explain the concept behind the new building she and her staff are about to move into. "The architect's guiding principle", she tells, "has been *playing with books*. And the result is more than a building, but rather a centre of communication. The distance between the old library downtown and the new building is only five minutes by car but otherwise they are worlds apart.

History

The need for new premises has been evident for some time and gives an indication of the hunger for knowledge of Aruba's people. Thirty-one years ago the Public Library started with 348 members and 3238 books. Today 11,694 Arubans are registered, which is almost 20% of the entire population! The number of books has surpassed the 100,000, and even more interesting: the number of young readers has in that period of 31 years gone up from 73 to 6933.

As early as 1974 it was realized that the library was outgrowing its present premises. Never built to house a library to begin with and no larger than 850 square metres, it had obviously served its purpose.

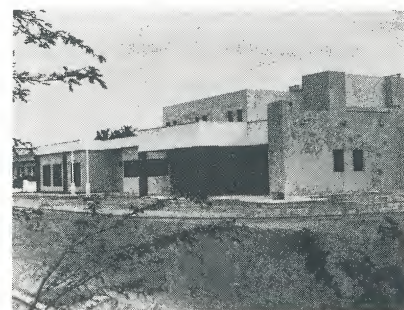
In spite of the pressing need to move to larger and more suitable offices, it took almost ten years to get the project realized.

Multi-purpose

The new 3,8 million dollar building is designed to serve the public's hunger for information in a

wide variety. Not only is there ample room to study the titles of the shelved books at one's leisure and to sit down and read undisturbed, a number of new departments cater to related needs as well. An audio-visual section sets books on video cassette or sound track for the handicapped. The news department offers besides the customary selection of daily newspapers and magazines, also the possibility of reviewing TV-newscasts from Caracas Television and Tele-Aruba. Tapes of news-broadcasts by the Voice of America, Radio Caracas, Curom and Voz di Aruba will also be available. The programmes are renewed weekly. The so-called 'Antillen-Room' contains a permanent and up to date display of Antillean publications. Antillean-made movies are shown on request.

One of the most fascinating features of the new library is the story-tower. Ascending winding



stairs one enters a futuristically designed room, in which daily a children story hour is held. Schools can use the hide-away in the mornings for special classes, using materials provided by the library.

A musical corner invites the public to listen in to recordings of Antillean music both old and modern. Space too is reserved for exhibitions and cultural activities. A bookbinders' shop and small printery are also included in the project which was paid for by Holland (75%) and the Aruban Government (25%). Says Mrs. van Romondt: "this library is meant not only to serve the needs of the individual reader but also to foster a sense of community". ■

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Simadan a mara?

Harvest festival more than folklore

by Frans Booi

The dancers move shoulder to shoulder holding each other by the waist, row after row forming a massive square much like the Roman armies used to march. But no thought of war lies behind Simadan, Bonaire's colourful harvest festival. Rather the pride of achievement and the joy of having made it together. Simadan recalls a unique period of the island's history and poses a question the younger generation might do well to heed.

Unity

During the weeks of preparation preceding the festival older people can still be overheard asking the curious question 'simadan a mara?', meaning 'has unity been arrived at' or more precisely 'is everybody ready to join hands?' The question points back to the days when the Bonaireans would collectively harvest their small plots of land. The following festivities thus became a symbol of unity. Dancing closely together in one square block the same thought was and is visually expressed. And the same applies to the songs that form an integral part of the harvest festival. They are composed in a question and answer style, and use a unique and rare rhythm. Of the several authentic Simadan melodies the 'Mailo' or 'Remailo' is the most well-known and must be labelled a Simadan classic. The same goes back to the days when Bonaire's economy was still by and large self

sufficient and thus implies a call to the pride of self-reliance.

Remailo

Early last century the Antilles had ceased to be of much

mile the system was called the 'mailo-system'. In the Simadan the people would chant 'We want our own plot of land. Not only for the King we wish to work'. Thus the Mailo became the most popular of simadan songs.



Co-operation

It is interesting to note that the development described above implied a smooth transition from an economy based on slavery to a society of small land owners years before slavery was officially abolished.

The success of this process must be largely ascribed to the willingness of the former slaves to co-operate in tilling the land and harvesting the crop. Sharing equipment and helping each other out, the celebration of the harvest became a truly communal happening. No wonder the question 'simadan a

mar?' was raised. For only if there was a true spirit of co-operation during harvest time could there be a real simadan.

Neglect

Much has changed since those days when Bonaire was known as the food-supplier of the Antilles. With the arrival of the (oil) industry many of the men went away to work in Curaçao and Aruba. Others accepted jobs with the government, which is now the largest employer on the island. It could be argued that the old days of Crown slavery have returned in a modern disguise. So much is true at least: the conuco's lie untended, the land

economic use to their colonial masters, the Dutch. As a consequence Bonaire was very much left to its own. A situation which allowed many of the ex-slaves, most of whom had belonged to the Crown (as did most of the land) to fence off for themselves small plots using cacti after the custom introduced by the Spanish in the 16th century. The colonial administration did not object and after some years even suggested to survey and register the so-called "conucu's". This was officially done during the English period (1807-1816) along the lines of a system that the British also used in Africa. Allocating property by the square

overgrown with weeds and the cacti hedges in disarray. Supermarkets offer the customer vegetables and meat imported from elsewhere. The goat staple, once the major provider of meat, is slowly diminishing and by lack of good stock losing quality. The small farmer and cattle breeder are rapidly becoming a rarity on the island, which once prided itself in being self-sufficient by hard and honest work.

The Simadan reminds us who enjoy its dances and songs as unique folklore of those days. It calls to memory the virtues of cooperation and loving-care for the land we inherited. There is a sad discrepancy between the desert like look of Bonaire's countryside and the happy dancing and singing still heard every year at harvest time. Simadan, for sure, is more than folklore!



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Turnaround on three fronts

telephone company trying harder

Only three years ago it looked like a lost battle. Overstaffed, badly administered and technically in decline Curaçao's telephone company found itself under heavy fire from an exasperated public.

Remotivation programmes, technical training courses, a thorough organizational overhaul and the start of a ten year renewal plan, have caused a remarkable turnaround. Coupled to a customer oriented approach the effort to upgrade services is clearly paying off. Criticism may not yet have turned into praise, it certainly has diminished and lost its sarcastic edge.

The secret behind this development: the government run service was turned into a limited liability company.

Heritage

The reason why in 1979 the telephone service was given the structure of a company operating on the principle of profit making, was twofold. The costs of much needed renewal of existing equipment and no less needed extension of the

network was estimated at Naf. 100. million. Credit, it was correctly assumed, would be much easier forthcoming, if the service was run in a businesslike manner. This could only be achieved, it was again correctly assumed, if the management would be enabled to pursue its policies unhampered by political meddling.

The changeover, however, came extremely abrupt. Without any proper preparation the management saw itself confronted with a staggering number of problems.

The newly formed company not only inherited 500 largely unmotivated and unskilled employees, many of them having been appointed on the basis of political patronage, but also a technical infrastructure rapidly becoming obsolete. All at once departments of finance, administration and personnel had to be set up, matters that up to now had been taken care of to put it euphemistically by the respective governmental departments.

The financial administration, for example, appeared to be in a downright shambles. At least

Naf. 8 million had not been collected from subscribers. The mailing of invoices was far behind schedule, creating a serious cash-flow problem. On top of all this the company was faced with a rapidly growing demand for connections and with developments in the technical field requiring know-how not available.

Motivation

"From the very start we had to implement two projects at the same time", tells Mr. Angel Kook (48), the company's general manager. "First of all there was the task of converting the unproductive service into an efficiently operating company. And secondly we had to start up a ten year project aimed at updating our technical infrastructure and meeting the projected demand for connections."

An immediate personnel-stop was announced. The company was clearly overstaffed. A situation caused by the malpractice of showering jobs on sympathizers by the political bosses. As a consequence many employees were

Manager Angel Kook flanked by employees



not suited for the jobs they were holding. A most undesirable situation for all parties concerned.

As the company had been obliged to take over all personnel, dismissal was out of the question. This left no other option than to embark on a programme of remotivation and training. It should be noted, however, that by far the majority of the employees remained officially in government service. Only a handful of the workers are fully employed by the company. This has created a dualism which for obvious reasons is not exactly conducive to the upgrading of efficiency. Mr. Kook is of the opinion that transforming services like his into limited liability companies is most advisable, but should never be done halfheartedly. He feels it ought to be possible to offer employees the necessary guarantees with regard to acquired social rights like pension arrangements, thus making it acceptable for all to join the new com-

pany from the very beginning. But in spite of the unsatisfactory situation at the moment, Mr. Kook is happy to testify to a marked change in attitude amongst his employees. "People are definitely much more motivated than three years ago", Kook says.

Customer oriented

The manager's statement is backed up by the employees themselves. Says Richard de Caster (31) who has been with the telephone service 8 years: much has changed during the past three years. Now I know what I'm doing and what the purpose is of my work". His obvious pleasure with the job he is doing and pride in his achievements — de Caster took AR on a trip pointing out the three cabinets he built last year allowing for 1400 new connections — is the result of a conscious effort on the management's part to improve internal

communication. Explains Miss C. H. Giskus in charge of motivation programmes "our company is a very technical undertaking. People have to be updated on developments all the time. But they also have to work together and understand why certain policies are being pursued". Last year three seminars were held to help department heads deal better with the human factor involved. Organization experts (van Dien en Co., accountants) were invited in to determine which aspects needed attention.

Much emphasis was put on stimulating a customer-oriented attitude. Reactions of participants to the seminars were quite positive. An immediate result has been the establishment of an information service which also handles complaints. But maybe even more important all employees are made aware of the importance of good public relations. ▽

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Finance

Simultaneously with trying to tackle the personnel problem an all out effort was undertaken to set order to the company's financial state of affairs. A new computer system was adopted and by the end of 1981 the backlog of invoices had been eliminated. Moreover 4^{1/2} million of the earlier mentioned 8 had by then been recovered. Expectations are that the financial administration will be on par by the middle of this year. Says Mr. Kook: experience shows that people are quite willing to pay on time as long as the invoices are sent regularly on time as well". The only client the company is having trouble with in this respect is the government.

The improved financial situation has helped the company to get its proposed ten year project off the ground. Aiming at an almost 100% increase of connections by 1990 (from the present 24000 to 47000) the projected plan hopes to meet the increasing demand and renovate the existing network at the same time.

The total costs are estimated, as mentioned before, at Naf.100 million. The Dutch government agreed to lend the company 20 million on condition that its rates would allow for a profit margin. With an additional credit of 40 million provided by Erikson and the Dutch Cable Industries(NKF), the company still has to come up with 40 million out of its own means. But now that the financial department has come to grips with the situation, the company is more optimistic. In particular as a substantial increase of income may be expected during the coming four years, when a great number of new subscribers will be served. Chief Outside Plan, mr. J. G. Constancia, told AR that during the present year 3000 new connections will be effected. Presently his department of 75 employees is ahead of schedule with regard to the laying of ca-

bles.

Included in the project is the building of three new telephone exchanges serving the busiest centres of town. These exchanges will provide customers with the most advanced facilities, like hot-lines and wake-me-up services.

Training

A third front on which a turnaround has been achieved concerns the technical training of personnel. Mr. F. C. van Pelt, in charge of the training department, points out that the present programme's history goes back beyond the structural change of 1979. Already in 1973 when more sophisticated equipment was acquired, the need for a training programme was recognized. With the help of the United Nations Development Programmed(UNDP) and the Inter Telecom Union(ITU) a modest training centre was built and two foreign experts drew up a curriculum. Between 1978 and 1980 it became clear that the accelerating development of tech-

nology demanded a fresh approach. A survey conducted in 1980 moreover revealed that 20% of the company's employees had to be labelled unstilled. A sorry result of the earlier quoted custom of political patronage.

Guarantee

Even more so because most of those workers belong to the younger age-groups. Mr. van Pelt last year devised a two year programme to impart the necessary know-how. Accomodations, however, are so limited that no more than 10 employees can enjoy the benefit of the course every two years. Says van Pelt "this process ought to be speeded up. We simply need more teaching facilities".

With a view to the projected developments van Pelt is no doubt right. Next year electronically operated telephone exchanges will be introduced. Pulse-code-modulation (PCM) will be used soon to make better use of transmission channels. A method that will allow 30 conversations to be held simultaneously on one cable! Obviously the introduction of such sophisticated techniques makes the upgrading of personnel and absolute must. In order to provide such necessary training, cooperation has been established with technical schools and the university. Several of the company's engineers have been sent abroad to get additional training. Admits van Pelt "I do see positive changes but for me they are coming on too slow". A healthy impatience which is shared by the management. Mr. Angel Kook told AR that the process of change went much slower than expected. But the very fact that those in charge of the company would like to move faster in order to serve the public better, seems the best guarantee that the described turnaround is only the beginning of a dynamic development. ■

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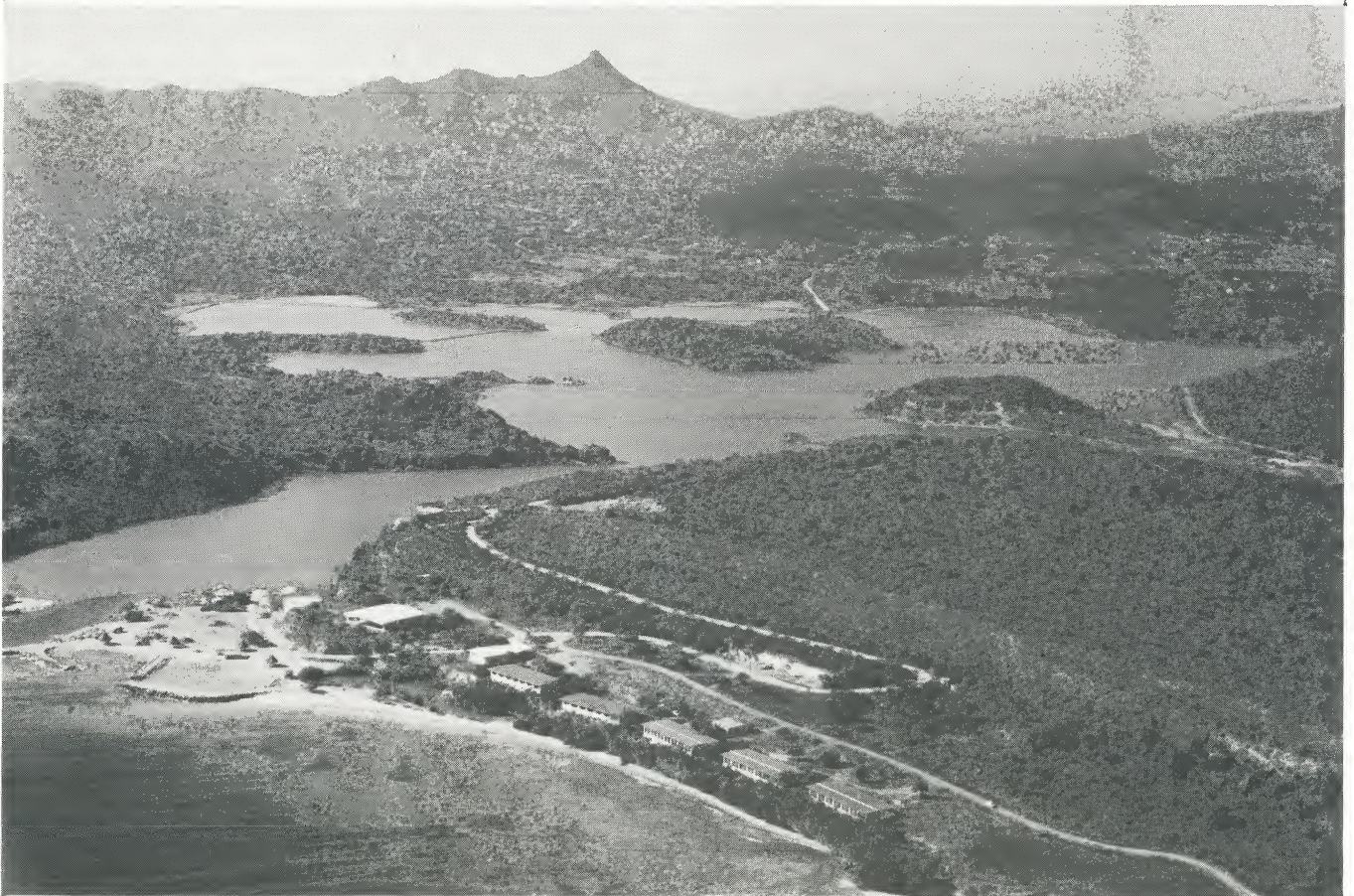
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New thrust toward a better St. Maarten

To the bohemian traveller the island may look like a perfect blend of the easy going West-Indian society and the sophisticated kind of resort modern tourism is looking for. But to the local St. Maartener the bad roads unlined by pavements, the unhindered wandering around of cattle, the obvious lack of town planning and primitive utilities have no such romantic overtones. On the contrary the disparity between the best of services offered to the tourist and the chaotic reality of every day St. Maarten are causing a mood of sulky dissatisfaction. For although most St. Maarteners have a sincere appreciation for the fact that their government has managed to put the island in a relatively short time as a number one resort on the tourist map, they are increasingly aware of the (inevitable) backlog in community services. An awareness that has led a number of highly motivated groups all over the island to organize themselves into community councils with the purpose of giving the government a hand in making the island more livable for its own people. An initiative, however, that is viewed with much suspicion by the politicians, as they fear that the councils may well turn into pressure groups threatening their authority.

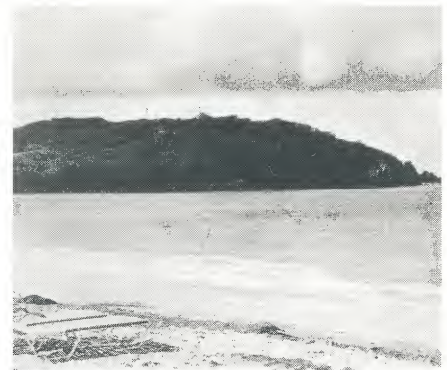
Objectives

The five community councils now in existence on the island were all established in the late 70-ties and early 80-ties. Mrs. O. Bryson-Pantophlet of St. Peters-Marigot Hill-Reward recounts how she and several neighbours became very much concerned about the lack of recreation possibilities for young people and the piling up of garbage in their district. "We got together to have more input. We felt that there was a need and nobody was doing anything about it". In order to have that input she and her friends decided to give their initiative legal status by establishing a foundation. The articles define the objective as "to support and preserve the esthetic and natural beauty . . . to organize social, cultural and educational functions . . . to create facilities and organize events . . . promoting a better and harmonious understanding amongst the people and to safeguard and promote a proper and organized growth of the district". The councils'

activities hitherto have concerned themselves with cleaning up the respective districts, creating play-ground and sports facilities for young people and running a most popular radio programme aimed at awareness building. In their battle against littering they received help from the St. Maarten Hotel Association. A battle which was waged in a playful manner by organizing a 'decorating garbage drum contest'.

Politics

Their genuine concern about a number of social ills prompted the councils to approach the island government. Raising issues like bad roads, increased bus fares, the uneven distribution of public telephones, too little illumination of the streets at night and the apparently sloppy collection of garbage, they came close to playing politics. In particular when they blocked a road, thus preventing the dumping of garbage close to a living area. Within the small island community almost everything is tinged with politics, but declares Mr. C. Hodge, a prominent council member, 'our organizations are definitely non political'. He adds, that the sole intention of the council's work is to render a positive contribution to the welfare of the island. He and his colleagues hope that this will be appreciated by the body politic, which until now has not reacted with much enthusiasm, probably because they consider the councils as highly critical of their administration.



Fort Amsterdam

Monuments


Rating high on the list of all five councils is the concern for St. Maarten's much neglected historical monuments. News that the ruins of Fort Amsterdam might soon fall prey to the continuing expansion of hotel construction led to strong protest. The Fort, which was originally built by the Spanish in 1632 and after destruction rebuilt in 1737, is one of the few historical monuments on the island. Restoration of the beautifully situated fortress would certainly enhance St. Maarten's touristic attraction. The councils appealed to Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and solicited the help of authorities like Prof. Temminck Groll and mr. M. P. Sypkens-Smit, both of whom have studied the historical heritage of the Antilles. The latter discovered that large sections of the older Spanish Fort are still buried beneath the shrub on the site, which was sold by the government to hotel entrepreneurs. He mentions that one can still see traces of the battle between Peter Stuyvesant and the Spanish in 1644. The battle in which Stuyvesant lost one leg. These and many more findings justify the councils' efforts to save the ruins and their pleas for restoration instead of demolition for the sake of construction. ■

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On the occasion of the Bicentennial

An Interview

Fellow Americans after meeting Alta Fowler, the US Consul-General in Curaçao, invariably comment 'isn't she some gal!' Antilleans feel no different. Or maybe they do. For those who have come to know hard-driving and ever cheerful Alta have taken more than a liking to her. She certainly is the most active US consul in years, taking a genuine interest in the Antillean people. Sitting down in her tastefully decorated living room over huge high-balls miss Fowler shared with AR her views on Antillean-American relations. Some excerpts of that conversation recently held are printed underneath.



On the bicentennial celebration of uninterrupted diplomatic and trade relations between the Netherlands and the USA and where the Antilles fit in: from St. Eustatius, which showed its support of the American revolution by saluting the naval vessel 'Andrea Doria' in 1776. Then of course there has been consular representation from 1793 onwards. In fact the consulate here opened one month or so ahead of the one in Amsterdam! And at the turn of the century they began sending down career men. It has been so ever since.

Diplomatic relations went via Holland, yes. But commercial relations across the Caribbean. There has always been very close contact between the two countries. At the moment, I would say, that official relations are pretty good. And the majority of the people are very open to Americans. There is no march-

ing against the USA on these islands!

On the tax treaty which the American Government wishes to amend in a way most unfavourable to the Antilles: I am doing my best. I keep telling them: you have friends there. They are democratic islands, a democratic country. That is the outstanding thing about it. But people here are amongst the wealthiest in the Caribbean. The prevailing attitude in Washington is: this is still part of Holland. They consider the Antilles Holland's baby. But it should be realized that independence is coming. I have told Washington: you can't wait for that. We can't let them lose the momentum cut-

ting off this most important source of income. And they are aware of this in Washington. That the islands have been included in the Caribbean Basin Initiative is definitely a step forwards. But beyond that more urgent matters apparently block out the importance of the issue at stake. In my opinion the only way to win the battle is via State.

On democracy which she calls the outstanding thing about the Antilles: The Antillean people vote. They don't shoot each other. There is no police state. Like in the past months when it did not seem possible to form a majority government the people said 'let's go back to the ballot box'.

In a sense this nation is more democratic than the USA. It is a small country with many political parties. Of course that makes it difficult to govern, but percentage wise it keeps more people involved. And in connection with your earlier question about the tax treaty: Washington does put a lot of value on that.

On the East-West confrontation: there is a realization of the importance of these islands astride the sea lanes. In particular our navy is very well aware of the strategic position of the Antillean islands. An important part of our oil supply goes via this area. This is not only true of the ABC islands but also of the Windwards, which, are very close to the routes to and from the Panama canal.

On the narcotics connection: unfortunately this is very important. Not only for the USA. I have continuously warned that a transit country always becomes a user country. Look at what happened in Holland. First it was only a connection. Now they have a real problem. I am very happy with the cooperation we are getting from the officials here. It really is tremendous. I would rate it at 99%.

On the question whether the Antilles should take a larger share in the shaping of foreign policy now taken care of by the Kingdom i.e. the Netherlands: Yes that is obvious. Everything is foreign affairs here. Ipso facto everybody is involved. But this is no easy matter. First of all there should be more training in foreign affairs for young people. If you see how it works you see how policy is created. And secondly you have to make your middle to senior civil servants realize that everything they touch is in fact foreign affairs.

On the festivities: all six islands will receive a selection of books, Americana and reference, for their libraries. I will give small receptions at the time of delivery to each island, sometime during the year. The director Foreign Service of the Latin American section, David Scott Palmer, will come down to speak on American policies in the Caribbean/Central American region. During the summer a number of US naval vessels will visit the Antilles, their crews taking part in special sports events. We hope to have Brenda Rocker-Smith, a promising young soprano, with us in September for a commemorative concert. And all this is of course on top of what the Central and Island Governments are planning, which I must say is quite impressive. ■

A Treaty

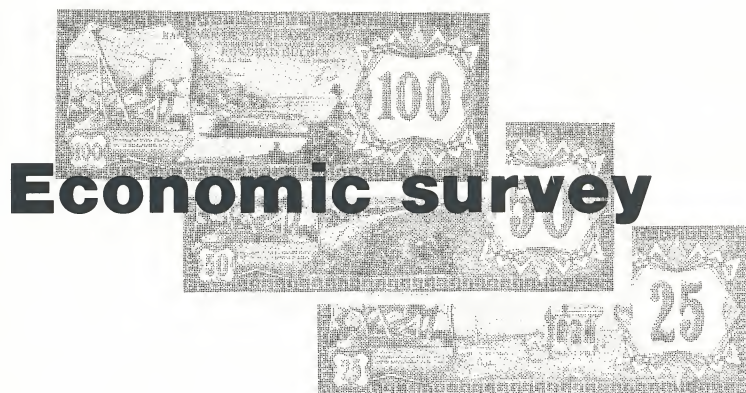
Of Amity and Commerce between Their High Mightinesses the States - General of the United Netherlands and the United States of America, to wit New - Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New - York, New - Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North - Carolina, South - Carolina and Georgia.

Their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands, and the United - States of America, to wit New - Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Province Plantations, Connecticut, New - York, New - Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North - Carolina, South - Carolina and Georgia, desiring to ascertain, in a permanent and equitable manner, the Rules to be observed, relative to the Commerce, and Correspondence, which They intend to establish, between Their respective States, Countries and Inhabitants, have judged, that the said End cannot be better obtained, than by establishing the most perfect Equality and Reciprocity, for the Basis of Their the signature.

In Faith of which, We the Deputies and Plenipotentiaries of the Lords the States General of the United Netherlands, and the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, in virtue of our respective Authorities and full Powers, have signed the present Treaty and apposed thereto the Seals of our Arms.

Done at the Hague the Eight of October, One Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Two.

Georges van Randwijck
John Adams
WCH Van Lynden.
J. Van Keckerom
J. Van C. Sedem
H. J. J. J.



by H. C. Beers

Foreign reserves declined during the months of March and April. However, the fall was not very high and can be considered to fit in with the seasonal pattern. The annual growth of the reserves decreased from f 119 million as per the end of February 1982 to f 97 million at the end of March. These surpluses increased the money supply. In addition money was being created through high domestic lending by the domestic banking system. Domestic credit rose by 19% or f 142,4 million in the period March 1981/February 1982.

Two local banks, namely Maduro & Curiel's Bank and Banco di Caribe, published balance sheet figures at the close of 1981. However, no income statement was included. In general they performed rather well, even in terms of income, as measured by retained earnings.

The statements on external payments showed a surplus of f 96,2 million for 1981. A remarkable feature is the drop in merchandise imports of f 26,4 million to f 1320,9 million as a result of the decline of the Dutch guilder and other European currencies against the Antillean guilder. Inflation decreased from 7,4% in January to 7,1% p.a. in February 1982.

Foreign reserves

The level of foreign reserves decreased during the months of March and April 1982. The total holdings amounted to f 300 million at the end of 1981 and grew to f 316 million as per February 18, 1982.

During March 1982 reserves dropped to f 295 million and the drain continued during the month of April. At mid April foreign reserves reached a level of approximately f 275 million. The decrease was recorded by both the Central Bank and the private banking system.

Such a drop is normal during the second quarter when proceeds from tourism are falling, whereas the outflow of investment income such as interest payments and profit disbursements will in general show an increase. However, on an annual basis the months of April also showed a drop compared with January and February, which showed annual increases of f 117

million and f 119 million respectively. During March the annual growth was reduced to f 97 million and April will be even less, but the definite figure is not yet known.

Although declining, the surpluses are still very high, reflecting an excess of domestic savings over domestic investments. In view of the existing unemployment high surpluses can hardly be considered favourable, when they are caused by the lack of sufficient investments.

Monetary developments

Recently the monetary figures as per the end of February 1982 have been published by the Central Bank. The money supply is growing at an annual pace of almost 20% or f 195 million, reaching a level of f 1213 million at February 28. In particular the component comprising time deposits and savings has been climbing rapidly, surpassing the growth rate of current accounts and money in circu-

lation. Time deposits include those held by the island governments.

At the end of February island governments' deposits amounted to f 97,1 million of which f 28,5 million has been deposited with the Central Bank and f 68,6 million with the private banking system. Most of these amounts are held in the name of the island government of Aruba.

At mid April the deposits with the Central Bank were still intact.

The additional amount of f 195 million has been created through domestic lending by the banking system and the growth of the foreign exchange reserves. Domestic credits rose by 19% or f 142,4 million during the period March 1981/February 1982.

This rate exceeds by far the existing inflation of 7,1% and suggests a development of investments. However, as already mentioned compared with domestic savings and in view of the high unemployment rate many more investments are needed.

Banking sector

Two local banks published their financial statements for 1981. The statements comprised only the condensed balance sheet as per December 31. Consequently the information given is very limited. Especially the lack of the profit and loss account hampers a proper judgement of the financial developments during the year. No balance sheet is complete without the income components and the expenditures as well as an explanatory statement indicating the standards applied in the valuations of the items published. ♦



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The lack of the profit and loss account is somewhat surprising, since the Code of Commerce of the Netherlands Antilles stipulates in article 76 that all banks must publish a balance sheet and an income statement.

The Maduro & Curiel's Bank experienced another successful year of operations. On a consolidated basis total assets and deposits were f 740 million and f 618 million respectively, an increase of 12% and 16% over the previous year. Together with a restructuring, stockholders' equity climbed to f 52,5 million, which is f 7,62 million or 17% more than at the close of 1980. Unfortunately the profitability of the banking operations cannot be calculated, but solvency and liquidity can. Solvency defined as the relation of stockholders' equity to outstanding loans amounted to 12,4% in 1980 and 12,3% in 1981. Liquidity can be defined as the net amount of cash and related items, such as treasury paper as well as balances with banks compared to deposits taken and funds borrowed. This percentage declined from 10.9 in 1980 to 39.6 in 1981.

Banco di Caribe recorded a growth in the balance sheet total of 26% or f 6,4 million to f 31 million.

Loans given and deposits taken amounted to f 23,2 million and f 27,3 million respectively. Stockholders' equity includes in addition to paid-in capital and retained earnings also a subordinated loan of f 300,000 million. Retained earnings doubled from f 611,000 to f 1,228,000. Solvency improved from 8,3% in 1980 to 9,4% in 1981 and liquidity from 19,1% to 21,8%.

Capital market

For some time utility company KAE was faced with the problem to raise f 20 million to finance its investments.

Apparently no individual local banking institution was willing to provide this amount for the period requested.

Finally the amount was furnished by a foreign bank, which in order to get the necessary funds without any currency risks, in turn borrowed from several local financial institutions, including banks and pension funds.

In near future probably the federal government will turn to the domestic capital market to raise an amount of presumably f 10 million to finance national airline A.L.M. The loan will yield an interest of over 12%.

The A.L.M. needs funds for the purchase of new airplanes and to finance the continuing losses. Last year the airline recorded a loss of almost f 4 million which was considerably less than the expected amount of f 9 million.

External payments

As already known external payments showed a record surplus of f 96,2 million for 1981, which resulted for a large part from remittances made by the oil refineries from their foreign banking accounts to pay local profit taxes.

The statements on the external cash flow as published by the Central Bank mention more details and comprise some interesting aspects.

Most remarkable is the decline in the value of merchandise imports. Usually, imports will increase in an open economy due to inflation and

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economic growth. In 1981, however, imports fell by f 26,4 million to f 1320,9 million.

This drop may partly be explained by the lower rate of the Dutch guilder, which made imports from the Netherlands cheaper.

Unfortunately no figures are available on the volume of imports, which perhaps also declined. Extremely high imports during 1980 may account for the decrease in 1981. The decline was recorded in the first and third quarter of 1981; the corresponding quarters in 1980 showed indeed very high amounts of imports compared with 1979.

The fall in net proceeds from transportation is the result of higher payments to other countries. Gross income stayed on the same level.

In general tourism performed rather well, showing an increase of f 70 million to f 656,2 million. The breakdown per island, however, indicates different developments.

Aruba experienced an excellent year recording a surge of f 16 million to f 259 million. Curaçao, however, hardly recorded any significant increase; net proceeds grew from f 189 million to f 193 million. St. Maarten showed a growth of f 18 million to f 198 million.

Curaçao really had a disappointing year. Although, gross proceeds from tourism did in fact grow from f 266 million to f 283 million, this small improvement of 6% was almost offset by higher spending abroad, which increased by 17% from f 77 million to f 90 million.

Development aid fell from f 119,9 million to f 57,9 million. The high amount of 1980 includes a special grant of f 34,3 million to improve the balance of payments and public finance as well as f 21 million for airforce planes.

The transfers by the oil refineries increased by f 98 million owing to tax payments, in particular by Lago Aruba. These payments are due in July of each year.

Also this year Lago will pay more than the minimum amount of f 33 million.

Sundry payments consist of private remittances to abroad which

amounted to f 98,8 million and outflow because of other services of f 21,2 million as well as net errors and omissions representing an inflow of f 69,2 million.

The latter experienced a tremendous increase compared with 1980 when statistical differences amounted to f 23,6.

External capital payments

The private sector increased its investments abroad to a considerable extent.

The net purchase of foreign securities went up by f 39,7 million to f 56,3 million while foreign deposits, which are maintained mainly with banks abroad, grew by over f 50 million. The high interest abroad, in particular compared with the domestic money and capital market, may account for this development.

The flow of government capital showed a change of f 22 million. The net amount climbed from f 31,3 million to f 53,3 million. The amount comprises borrowings from the Dutch government and the E.E.C. Development Fund as well as repayments on outstanding debts. Furthermore the changes in the balance of the treasury account with the Netherlands are included.

C.O.T.

Curaçao Oil Terminal operates at the moment at half its capacity of

one million barrels. The company, established in 1974 after the oil crisis, reached its maximum capacity in 1978. Last year the average use was about 700,000 barrels and nowadays approximately half a million barrels. In all those years more than 6,500 ships have called at the company.

The year of 1981 proved to be rather successful. A net profit of f 55,5 million was recorded. C.O.T. agreed to pay a tax of f 22,4 million to the island government of Curaçao. An amount of f 17 million has already been paid. During the first quarter of 1982 net income was about f 10 million resulting in an annual profit of f 40 million if no changes will occur in the international oil market. In that case C.O.T. will pay a tax of f 15 million. The management expects that the profits will continue during the next five years, although the circumstances are more difficult than in the past. The recession and energy saving measures will also affect the C.O.T. operations.

Moreover, the sale in the U.S.A. has been hampered by import restrictions, while the Louisiana Offshore Port is certainly a strong competitor.

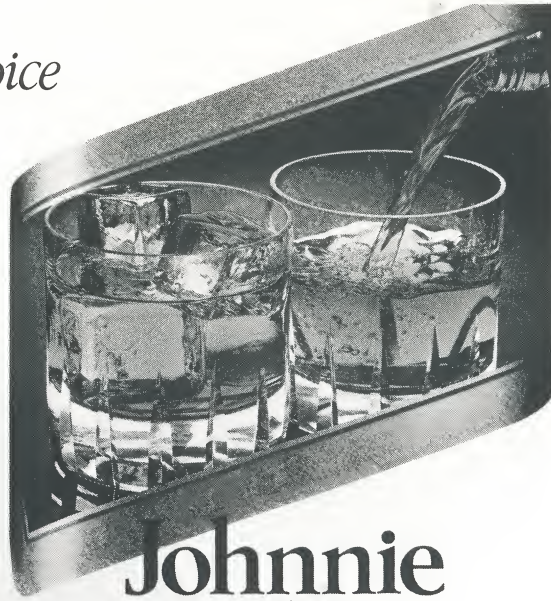
The affiliated company Bullenbaai Marine Services recorded a profit of f 7,5 million during 1981. This company will pay a tax of f 4,9 million. ■

External cash flow; net amounts. f-million.

	1981	1980	change
Current payments:			
Merchandise	- 1320.9	- 1347.3	+ 26.4
Transportation	327.6	380.2	- 52.6
Tourism	656.2	586.2	+ 70.0
Investment income	- 111.1	- 98.6	- 12.5
Offshore taxes	118.9	100.5	+ 18.4
Development aid	57.9	119.9	- 62.0
Government payments	9.1	16.3	- 6.9
Transfers oil refineries	361.2	263.2	+ 98.0
Operational expenditures	122.8	99.9	+ 22.9
Sundry payments ¹⁾	- 50.8	- 64.4	+ 13.6
Balance current payment	171.2	55.9	+ 115.3
Capital payments:			
Securities	- 56.3	- 16.6	- 39.7
Real Estate	- 0.3	3.8	- 1.1
Loans	- 21.2	- 23.0	+ 1.8
Deposits	- 50.8	0.8	- 51.3
PRIVATE SECTOR			
Government capital	- 128.3	- 35.0	- 93.3
Balance capital payments	- 75.0	- 3.7	- 71.3
Increase foreign reserves	96.2	52.2	+ 44.0

¹⁾ Including errors and omissions.

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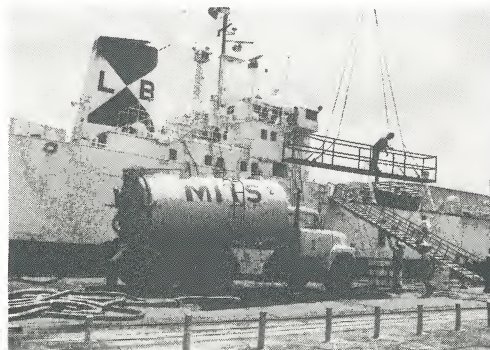
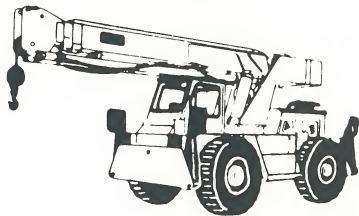
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Small Business in Curaçao

Some characteristics

by Freddie Curiel

Small business plays an important role in the economy of Curaçao. Almost half the working force earns its livelihood in this sector. For that and a number of other reasons it would be a serious mistake if economic planning focuses too much on big industry. On the contrary it is small business that should be stimulated in the first place.

A definition of terms is first of all required. This can be done by way of comparison. A gas station is usually considered 'small business' and an oil refinery 'big industry'. But to be useful in research, legislation and economic planning, such a general description needs precision.

Definition

More often than not quality is used as a determining factor. An approach which can be highly misleading. Defining the concept at stake on the basis of characteristics like independent management, conjunction of ownership and management, orientation on the immediate environment etc. is obviously not very practical. What should be taken into account first are criteria like the number of employees, total investment and sales volume i.e. standards of quantity. (The author is of the opinion that of the criteria mentioned the number of employees is the most important).

It should be noted, however, that it is virtually impossible to lay down universal norms in this respect, as situations differ widely with regard to geographics and levels of economic and technological development. It is to be expected for example that average sales per employer are higher in the USA than in Curaçao, because of the more advanced technology, the greater availability of capital and the much larger size of the market in the first mentioned country.

Likewise Steimetz's scale of critical development stages for small business does not apply universally. The scale indicates a first critical stage with regard to management when the number of employees reaches 30. But in Curaçao a firm employing 30 people can hardly be called small.

Thus rewriting the scale for Curaçao seems logical.

Adaptation

In accordance the workgroup 'small business' of the University of the

Netherlands Antilles has after proper research and mindful of the sectoral differences drawn up a number of indicative criteria with regard to small business in Curaçao.

For this purpose 262 out of the 3800 companies have been investigated. All of them had less than 25 employees. Moreover they were carefully selected from 12 different branches, making sure that each branch was at least represented by 10 concerns.

Out of this research the following figures have been obtained:

Number of employees	0-10
Total investment	Naf. 0-500,000
Sales per year	Naf. 0-1,000,000

Caution, however, should be exercised as significant differences may occur between the different branches. This is illustrated by index I in which the distribution of total investment in three categories of three different sectors is indicated.

Relevance

As mentioned above it would be a serious mistake to concentrate economic planning on big industry. Natural resources are too minimal and the risk of discontinuation too large. Thus reality forces us to focus primarily on small business.

According to the above mentioned research the average number of people employed in this type of enterprise in Curaçao is 7. In total this amounts to almost 50% of the labour force! A figure which leaves little doubt about the importance of small business for the em-

ployment situation.

Although the impact of small business on the balance of payments, an economic datum almost just as important for Curaçao as the employment figure, has never been determined, it may be assumed to be of less importance than the employment figure. An observation which should not lead to underestimating the importance of the balance of payments, certainly not with a view to the future.

To discuss whether preference should be given to export promotion or to import substitution is beyond the scope of this article. The author, however, is inclined to favour the former.

But doing one thing need not imply leaving out the other. Import substitution needs to be stimulated with all available means. Such a policy will, no doubt, be of great benefit to small business, in particular with regard to agriculture and industry. Export promotion, on the other hand, will stimulate trade and the service-rendering industries.

The thrust towards the latter should primarily be initiated by the internationally oriented enterprises in this sector. A development which may result in positive external economic effects, favouring the more locally oriented trade and service rendering industries, which in turn will stimulate, be it in a more indirect way, small business.

Potential

An often heard misconception is that small business can only survive by the grace of Big Industry's tolerance or because the latter has not yet moved into certain markets. Another such misconception is that small business' continuity can only be guaranteed by government protection.

INDEX I		Hotel/Rest	Retail	Construction
		%	%	%
Naf	0 - Naf 100,000	88	65	76
Naf	100,000 - Naf 250,000	6	12	25
Naf	250,000 - Naf 500,000	6	11	25
Naf	0 - Naf 5,000	100	88	76

% of the investigated companies in the respective categories

The author disagrees. Small business has its own intrinsic assets which it can continue to exploit, such as:

- a much more intensive relation to the markets and
- as a result a greater opportunity for market and product specialization
- more room for competition and
- greater flexibility in organization.

Admittedly the last point usually does not work out very well in practice because of

- a. frequently occurring problems of a family nature. A typical example is that the younger generation often prefers to launch out by itself rather than succeed in the family business.
- b. the attitude of many entrepreneurs to regard their business both as their baby and mistress. An attitude which makes them too apprehensive of the possible influence third parties, they need for expansion, might acquire in their business.
- c. Many entrepreneurs use their business for the purpose of self-satisfaction.

Small markets, like Curaçao demand small enterprises. As there is no room for mass production small business can function much more effectively, in particular if no advanced technology and as a consequence no large capital investment is required. This becomes even

INDEX II		% of number of companies per sub. sector	average increase of employment per company
largest pos. growth:	paper industry	60	0.83
	wholesale trade	53	2.17
	financing industry	48	1.94
	retail trade	34	0.60
Largest neg. growth:	wood-and metal work	71	- 2.14
	transport	80	- 5.50
	hotel/rest/.	34	- 0.86
	construction	25	- 0.71

more relevant in situations (Curaçao) where capital is tight.

Survival

Although everyone has in principle the opportunity to start a small business, proper planning is required. Many are the pitfalls which have to be evaded, if the business once started is to survive. Dun /& Bradstreet have provided us with a list of nine important causes which can lead to failure:

lack of management expertise, too little starting capital, wrong choice of location, faulty stock policy, too heavy investment in fixed assets, inadequate credit policy, too much withdrawal for private purposes, overexpansion and poor labour attitude.

It is evident that all these aspects are also present in Curaçao. In the case of failure or near bankruptcy they frequently are

found in combination. Young enterprises seem particularly prone to make one or more of the mentioned mistakes. As a result their death rate is the highest.

Although financial problems are the main cause of failure in most cases, at least part of this phenomenon can be traced back to bad management and lack of experience. This implies that the financial burden, which small entrepreneurs in Curaçao consider their greatest problem, could be alleviated considerably by upgrading the general level of management.

To start a business, even a small business, great ideas are not enough. All the consequences should first be studied carefully. A 100% dedication to the job and the willingness to sacrifice are indispensable. Of course it would be ideal if personal aspirations could coincide with the organizational objectives, but certainly in the beginning the first will have to be tempered. The reverse of what we usually see in Curaçao!

The earlier mentioned inquiry has provided some insight into the situation of small business in Curaçao. In the following paragraphs a compendious survey of its findings will be given.

Structure

By far the majority of concerns have sole proprietorship (59%), while 34% are limited liability companies. In 42 of the 262 enterprises the juridical structure was changed. In 30 instances this meant a change from sole proprietorship to the limited liability status. Only in 14 cases such a change also involved a change of ownership.

Of the enterprises screened 58% are younger than 10 years. Interesting is that the number of concerns between 10-20 yrs old proved to be smaller (16%) than the number of those over 20 yrs (26%). This could indicate that a large number of enterprises were established during the last ten years. It may also mean that the 10-20 year phase is very critical. Another conclusion which may be cautiously drawn is that the con-

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version from sole proprietorship to limited liability status has taken place mostly during the last ten years.

The average figure of employment for the limited liability companies (15) appears to be three times larger than in the companies with sole proprietorship (5). In the latter, however, the number of relatives employed is much higher, showing a ratio of 5 : 1.7.

Of the total labour force of the investigated companies 12% is made up of relatives.

Personnel

The general average of employees per concern is 7;

Of the investigated enterprises 79% has no more than 25 employees.

The enterprises with the largest number of employees appear to have the greatest need for personnel. Of all the companies investigated 20% needs more personnel. An analysis of growth of the employment figure in the period 1976 - 1981 shows that the whole-sale trade and finance companies have advanced most, while the branches of wood- and metal work and transport have receded most. (see Index II)

One head management is quite common (66%). Only in approximately 10% of the concerns does management and ownership coincide. This is most com-

mon in those cases where management is exercised by more than one person. The fact that in 2/3 of the limited liability companies' managers are also shareholder explains the select character of that group.

In 29% of the investigated companies consultation with the employees has increased, whereas in 50% no progress in this respect has been made. Only in 3% did the consultative process slow down. It seems evident that when the number of employees increases consultation becomes more intense.

Book-keeping

A little over 50% of the companies do their own book-keeping. No assessment can be given of standards. There is, however, little difference in the time-span of information availability with those companies which have put out their book-keeping to contract. A fact which does not reflect favourably on the companies which do their own.

In general, according to management, there are no administrative problems. In any case those firms which have put their book-keeping out to contract find it most problematic.

During the investigation the impression has been formed that book-keeping is not experienced as giving any trouble because it is not considered to be impor-

tant. Knowledge of the company's financial state of affairs appears in most cases to be lacking in detail, which is no doubt partly due to an underestimation of the administrative function. This is illustrated by the fact that 39% of the companies admit to having no idea about the ratio between the inventory and the total investment, whereas only 29% concede to having administrative difficulties.

Finance

The general average of total investment amounts to Naf 132,000.—. Taking into account the earlier mentioned average of employment (7) the average investment per employee for all subsectors is Naf 19,000.—

Total investment of 34% of all companies is less than Naf 50,000.—. Of the one-man enterprises 74% has a balance total not exceeding Naf 100,000.—. In the case of limited liability companies this is only 18%. Thus it can be concluded that there exists a definite connection between the juridical structure chosen and the size of investment. The limited liability structure comes into the picture in the case of more sizeable investment. Half of this type of companies have a balance total of between Naf 100,000.— and Naf 490,000.—.

Quite surprising is the situation with regard to credit. It appears that 40% is loan

free. This applies mainly to those companies the investment total of which does not exceed Naf 100,000.—. In any case the average figure for all sub-sectors is relatively low: 18%. Only 11% of the investigated companies have credits exceeding 50%.

Use of credit appears to increase with the size of investment. This can be seen from the fact that 21% of the companies with an investment total of under Naf 50,000.— are financed for more than 50%. But in the cases of investment between Naf 50,000.— and 100,000.— the figure reads 38%.

Short term loans dominate the credit structure. Within every investment category at least 40% of the companies has a credit structure of which 75% consists of short term loans. A percentage which goes up as investment increases. It should be observed, however, that in the higher investment categories the role of bank loans becomes less prominent, which indicates that bigger firms make use of other means of credit e.g. supplier's credit.

Of the 262 investigated companies 156 are financed partly by means of loans, 105 of which make use of bank facilities for this purpose.



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In the case of 80 of this last mentioned group guarantess have been demanded. In 29 instances (out of those 80) a combination of guarantees had to be given. Capital-supply by relatives and friends was given in 26 cases, mostly in the category of limited liability companies. There is no evidence of a clear connection between this kind of supply and the number of relatives employed.

Companies which witnessed expansion between 1976 and 1981 have more investment schemes than companies which did not grow or even receded. It is also evident that the readiness to invest is hardly or not influenced by problems concerning personnel, administration or financing. From this it may be deduced that investment planning is largely guided by market expectations. This is stressed by what was mentioned earlier i.e. a positive growth in the wholesale sector where market expectations are good and a recession in the transport branch where the market is not considered to be promising.

This survey can be concluded moderately optimistic. On the whole market expectations are fair. Only 44 enterprises (17%), mostly from the transport and construction sectors, judge the situation negatively. Non committal (neither good nor bad) is the appraisal from branches like wood and metal work, the paper industries, hardware and domestic suppliers, and the trade in commodities, clothing and footwear. Which leaves a whole spectrum of small businesses which view the future with reasonable optimism. ■

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Aruba's Archeological museum

Provides insight into pre-columbian times

Since December 1981 Aruba is the proud proprietress of a museum entirely dedicated to pre-Columbian society as it manifested itself on the island. Its permanent exhibition provides the public with a wealth of information about the Amerindians, which inhabited Aruba long before Columbus discovered the Caribbean. The founding of the museum was preceded by many years of archeological research both by amateurs and professionals.

Accidental

First mention of the accidental discovery of 'mysterious' objects on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao dates back a hundred years. What was found were human bones, or large pots containing bones, ash deposits with shell and fish waste, decorated pot sherds or even complete dishes, sharpened stone axes, beads made of shell and a host of broken material: pot sherds, broken stones showing traces of human use and shell fragments.

From the moment of discovery it was evident that these findings could not be remnants from colonial times. They were simply too different from anything known within living memory.

The objects and the places where they were found were generally considered to be rather weird; and at an early stage it occurred to the people that they might well be left-overs from the distant, unknown past, when the islands were still inhabited by Amerindians. Many thought it better not to concern oneself too much with those old, forgotten things.

Systematic

The first to start energetically collecting and studying these old

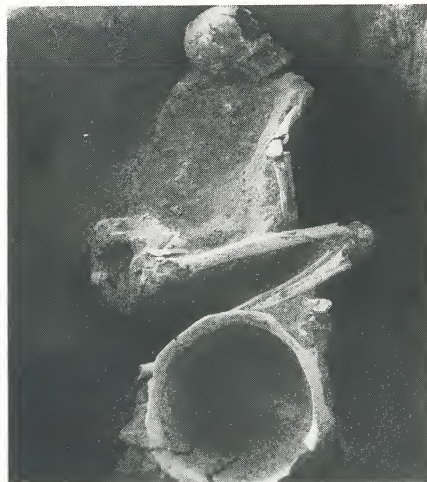
finds in a systematic way was a Dutch priest, Father A. J. van Koolwijk. Between 1880 and 1890 he sent a large collection to Holland and the experts there confirmed his belief that the materials were indeed pre-Columbian objects, which had belonged to and been made by the original Amerindian inhabitants.

During the present century amateurs continued to collect more materials. As a result more and more people became interested. Even the government started to pay attention. From 1970 onwards systematic archeological work has been going on both in Aruba and Curaçao. Not only were many new discoveries made but also many new data obtained concerning the life-style of the islands' former inhabitants. Much of these are now on view to the public in Aruba's archeological museum.

Way of life

Modern excavation techniques have made it possible to learn in detail about the life of the Amerindians. Radiocarbon-dating has revealed that the islands were inhabited from around 500 to 1500 A.D. In Aruba there were

grave with gift



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three large villages where we now find Savaneta, Santa Cruz and Tanki Flip. In addition there were a number of small scattered settlements. Fishermen lived along the northeast coast. Maize was grown in the villages and at the south coast shell-fish was caught. The Amerindians lived in oval huts made of wood, probably with matting between the posts. They certainly did not build clay walls. Thousands of post-moulds have been found and recorded.

There is evidence of a variety of burial traditions which indicates a complex social structure.

It should be realized that the Amerindians lived in the so-called Stone Age as did all of the inhabitants of the Americas except the Inca's. Their knives and axes were made of different kinds of stone. Their pottery was, however, of a surprisingly developed nature. Findings show that it varied from large regularly shaped storing pots and burial urns to extraordinarily complicated earthenwork of a delicate nature, decorated with animal heads, spouts, loops and flaps, sometimes with a concave rim, and painted with complex geometrical motifs.

Little import

The stone artifacts show great diversity: knives, axes, chisels, drills, hammers, polishing-stones to make earthenware waterproof, oscillating stones, grindstones, millstones for maize and many other instruments. Almost all the kinds of stone used are to be found in Aruba. Only in a few cases the raw material must have been imported from the continent. Unfortunately nothing has been left of the organic materials they used, such as wood and plant fibres. A number of pot sherds, however, have imprints of weaving and plaiting, which proves that the Amerindians on Aruba did have such materials at their disposal.

which the dead were buried with drawn up legs. Many skeletons in that position have been found. In some cases a gift consisting of a pot or dish had been added. Sometimes the deceased was buried in a squatting position in a large urn, with another urn upside down on top of it as a cover, so that the two completely enveloped the dead body. In two of the discovered graves a gift was found consisting of a small cup with a handle and with pierced holes along the edge, made of lignite, a kind of brown coal imported from the continent. In one out of the more than 150 discovered graves a cooking pot and frying pan have been found with the soot deposit still on them.

stad. These and a collection of photographs enable the interested visitor to obtain a fair impression of what life was like on Aruba a thousand years ago. He will also learn that Aruba was culturally a part of a rather homogeneous and separate entity. For the artifacts exhibited prove the theory that there has been no connection between the cultures of Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and Northwest Venezuela on the one hand, and the great contemporary civilizations of Mexico and Peru on the other hand. Nor for that matter with the Greater Antilles and the Eastern Caribbean islands. A fact which makes the existence of a museum dedicated to pre-Columbian times on Aruba even more important. ■

Display

Many of the mentioned findings are on display in the museum, which is housed in one of the few old buildings remaining in Oranje-

Graves

Discovered graves usually amount to no more than narrow pits in

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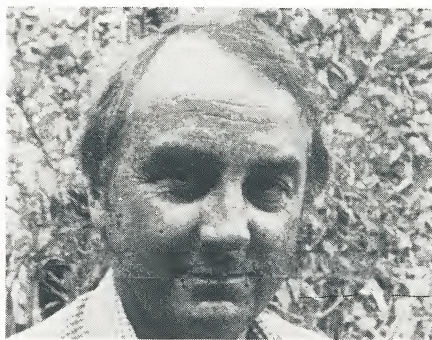
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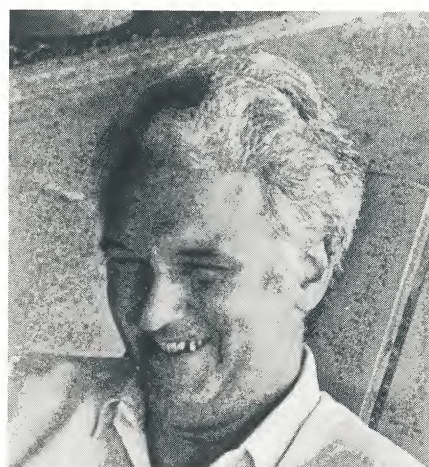


Europe's foremost business newspaper the FINANCIAL TIMES recently announced its intention to publish a Netherlands Antilles survey. Meeting business and community leaders during a visit to the Antilles last April, Mr. **Nicholas Whitehead**, the paper's European manager, explained that the survey will cover topics like offshore banking, tourism, politics and industry. Similar surveys conducted by the paper, which has an estimated readership of 850.000 in 120 countries, have proven to be of long-lasting value. Reason why Mr. Whitehead was advised to postpone the intended date of publication from August to October, when the impact of the June elections can be judged more accurately. Mr. Whitehead said that a new date of publication will soon be announced. During the summer one or more members of the TIMES' editorial staff will visit the Antilles to prepare what may well turn out to be one the most important exposures the Antilles have had in years.

No epithet seems more apt to describe Antilleans than music-o-holic. But extraordinarily enough, little research has been done to chart the history of the islanders' musical expressions, to trace the influence of other cultures — and maybe even worse to safeguard their musical past from being forgotten. Good news, however, is at hand. An Antillean-Belgium team, headed by prof. **Jos Gansemans** (39), recently started what has been neglected too long. After a month of initial research on the spot, Gansemans speaks of a wealth of information still available. He also announces concrete plans to make the eventual results of his team's work available to the public.

Teaching ethno-musicology at Belgium's famous university of Leuven, the young professor's interest in the Antilles was awakened when he met one of his Antillean students. Mr. Eddy Ayoubi. Curious to find out how much of today's musical expression in the Antilles can still be traced back to African heritage — Gansemans' special field of study concerns Central Africa — he inquired at the appropriate Dutch institutions what research had been done on the musical history of the Netherlands Antilles. To his surprise he drew an almost complete blank. Instead of becoming discouraged Gansemans took on the implied challenge. Not long afterwards a measure of cultural cooperation between the Antilles and Belgium was agreed upon and the above mentioned team appointed.

Besides yielding evidence of African elements still present in modern Antillean music — mostly seen in the type of in-



struments, the use of a contracted scale and the structure of song composition — the conducted research also revealed remnants from Indian times and influences from places like Sto. Domingo, Cuba, Haiti and Venezuela as well as from Europe.

The team will continue its efforts to gather and compile available data in the future. In the meantime a documentation centre will be created to make sure that no further losses of heritage will be incurred. Specialized studies will be undertaken on topics like the use of musical instruments and the role of music in Antillean society.

Last but not least a record containing songs and melodies collected by the team as well as some of its observations will be on the market soon for the listening pleasure of the public.



Checking out Curaçao's hospital on the possibility of installing radiation therapy equipment, expert **Arthur Kay** of Philips, England, said to be quite satisfied. Underneath the fairly new out-patients department a bunker has been built offering sufficient protection against radiation. Mr. Kay, who advises hospitals in the Western Hemisphere on highly sophisticated radiation equipment as well as funding possibilities, underlined the need for such cancer treatment facilities in the Netherlands Antilles. The disease's rate in the country is comparatively high (see AR vol. 2, nr. 3).



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Rising crime in Curaçao

by Wim Luiten.



Criminality in Curaçao is getting quite a lot of attention lately. Radio, television, the government, the police, groups of worried citizens and scholars are all increasingly showing their concern. Especially the small offences against property by breaking and entering into houses and shops cause a great deal of anxiety.

In his inaugural address at the University of the Netherlands Antilles Professor Boom recently mentioned some of the consequences of this growing criminality. Many citizens have had to take out expensive insurance policies against burglary, while the purchase of safes, installation of bars and alarm systems and acquisition of watch dogs puts them to great expenses. At the same time he pointed out the psychic disadvantages: many people nowadays scarcely dare leave their homes. Citizens who feel threatened procure firearms illegally; the demand for heavier punishment becomes stronger; in short the community runs the risk of getting a very grim look. This development urgently requires further reflection on the causes of and the fight against criminality.

White collar and T-shirt crime

Criminality may be described as law breaking conduct. The small offences against property that cause so much anxiety are only a small part thereof. The incorrect filling out of tax returns, faulty statement of expenses, accepting bribes, evading social premiums, smuggling and corruption, these are all frequently occurring phenomena that can just as well be called crimi-

nal, and which undoubtedly cause much more damage to the community than the small offences against property, which are getting so much attention at the moment. But one can hardly perceive any alarm on that account. Obviously the existing opinion about this form of criminality is that it is not morally censurable and only wrong when you get caught. However, in speaking about criminality and prevention this "white-collar crime" should not be left out.

Pirates and slave-traders

Respect for the moral authority of law is not very high in Curaçao.

This is not surprising, taking into account the history of the island. Privateering, smuggling, exploitation of one human being by another through slavery, profiting from wars elsewhere have been important sources of income. Actually our society to an important degree still lives on the edge of the law. Our economy for a not inconsiderable part consists of activities that cannot bear too much exposure, such as e.g. the casino business and off-shore industry. That people living in such a cultural climate tend not to pay too much attention to the law or to regard it as something to be evaded is in fact rather to be expected.

Disintegration

Criminality is often rightly thought to be connected with unemployment. The high unemployment rate of $\pm 20\%$ of the working population mainly presses on the groups of youth with little education. The jobless percentage in this group is probably even higher.

Theirs is not an enviable situation.

The person who for whatever reason has received a very poor or limited education has indeed very little chance of ever exercising a full social function in this community. Criminal behaviour here has a signalling function. A sign that certain groups expect so little of our social order that they place themselves outside this order and reject its values.

If this presupposition is correct, it is not sufficient for the Government to do nothing more than use its penal sanction machinery. A profound evaluation must take place of the question how we can reconstruct our society so that there is a place in it for everyone.

A criminological institute as the driving force behind this social discussion, as proposed by Professor Boom, certainly seems worthwhile considering. ■

(Translated from Dutch)

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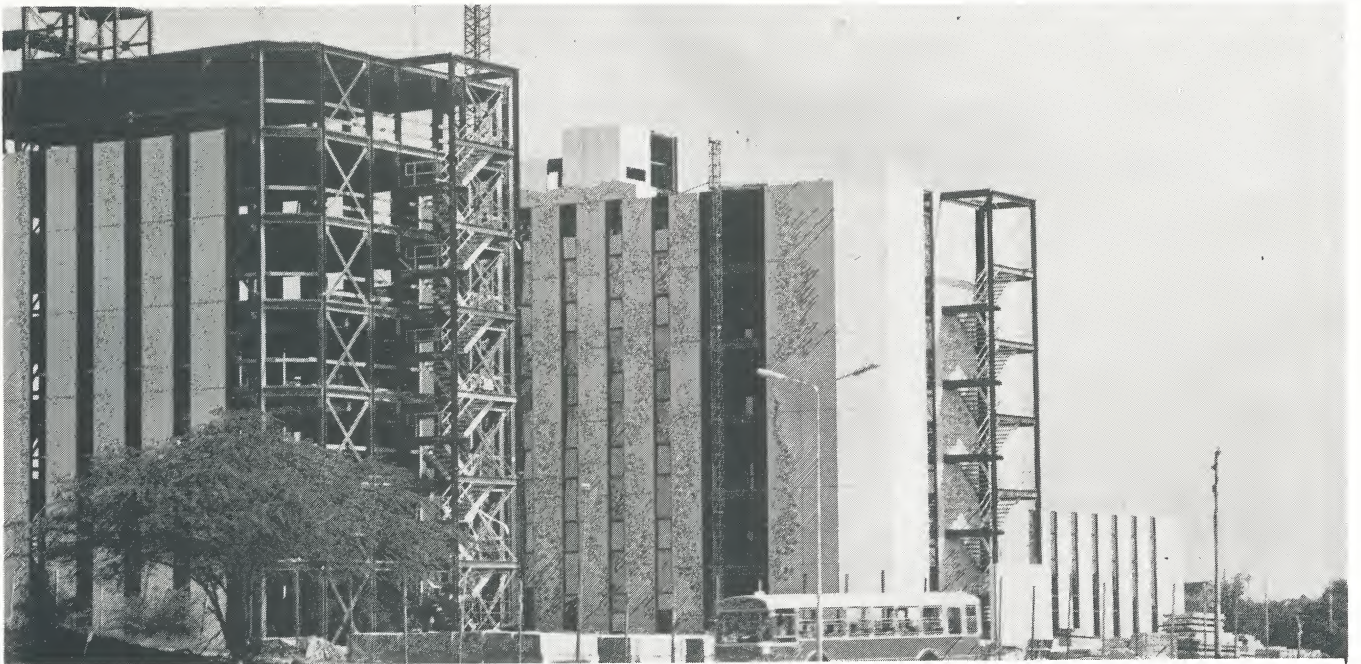
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The caribbean initiative may boost the industry

International politics is not a topic this section is usually concerned with. But recent developments, unnoticed by the Antillean press, may well prove to be of significant importance for the future of the country's tourist industry. If only for that reason they are worth drawing attention to.

It has often been remarked that if US politicians would have had more vision and lent a more willing ear to the developments in the Caribbean, Cuba would not have had any reason to establish the close relationship it now has with the USSR.

Apparently the US has learned its lesson. The developments in Central-American and signs of leftism on some Caribbean islands led to a typically American initiative for financial aid seemingly modelled after the well known Marshall-plan, which worked so well for Europe after the second world war.

As soon as details of this plan, called the Caribbean Basin Initiative (see AR vol, 2, no.2), reached the press it was criticized for at least one serious omission. No mention was made in that first draft of the C.B.I. of tourism, a basic source of income for all islands in the Caribbean!

It should be noted, however, that President Reagan invited all parties concerned to voice their objections and suggestions in the clearest terms possible. One well founded criticism is that the overlooking of such an important element, as mentioned above, could easily lead to the conclusion that the majority of funds programmed for CBI (350 million US dollars) would end up in the remote economies of Central America, leaving little or nothing for the Caribbean region.

It is indeed a rather positive sign that in the USA a small group of tourism-oriented businessmen from the world of aviation, hotel industry and tour operations sounded the alarm and contacted federal government officials and Congressmen on the subject.

As a number of the recommenda-

tions are of great importance also for our islands, a brief report on the subject seems appropriate.

The group signals the possibility that the plan may be doomed to fail because it concentrates heavily on emergency support for the politically turbulent Central American countries and ignores the silent non-violent economies in the Caribbean.

They suggest the foundation of a Caribbean Tourism Authority for the whole area, including American territories such as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Pointing out that the USA accounts for the largest share of Caribbean tourism the group hints at the possibility of increasing that figure considerably. The message is loud and clear: *"let us participate together with you especially in the marketing of your tour products, because small islands have only a small profile"*.

In connection to this it should be remembered that the World Bank designed a programme for the countries of the European Community asking for their financial aid to develop regional marketing of the Caribbean in Europe. An amount of over 6 million US dollars is reported to have been committed for a period of five years.

Europeans may welcome the idea that the USA is watching the store at this end and the US exporters of goods and services will, no doubt, applaud the idea.

It remains to be seen of course whether the Caribbean islands will be so eager to accept more American influence, but the plan has its merits.

The group notes that international air transportation to and from the area is reasonably adequate, but finds Intra Caribbean routes 'in disarray'.

The enormous cost increase in shorthaul jet operations cut out private owned airlines. Government owned companies stay small in size, because their shareholders face heavy deficits on their national budgets.

Although the islands of the Netherlands Antilles have nothing to complain with regard to airport facilities, there are islands in the region which are not so fortunate. Arriving on the airport of Trinidad for example gives the feeling that you are landing on a large washboard.

Incentive tax regulations could also be of enormous help to get more convention business and stimulate purchasing in the shopping areas in the Caribbean.

Furthermore it is a fact that Americans are highly sensitive to rumours and easily shy away when their leaders declare an island or a country "a trouble spot". Pronouncements about existing peace and a cooperative spirit made by American leaders tend to lead to increase of tourism, as can be seen in the case of Jamaica.

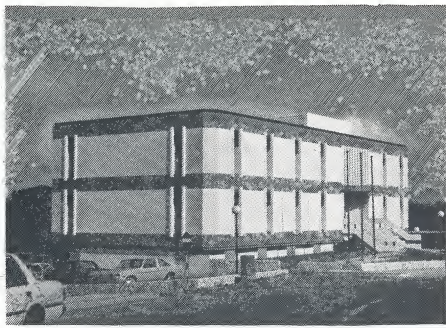
Whether it is the USA that will supplement initiatives of the European Community or vice versa is not so important, but it is a rather healthy development which may end up in a good mix of European visitors and American tourists.



Undersecretary Tom Enders announcing CBI

However, if the Caribbean wishes to profit from this development there are a few things our governments have to bear in mind, viz. that the upgrading of our products should not wait for better times to come and that neither Europe nor the USA are talking about specific islands, but about 'a region' or rather the Caribbean Basin.

Conclusion: *there is no time for day-dreaming in splendid isolation. Join the action.!!* ■

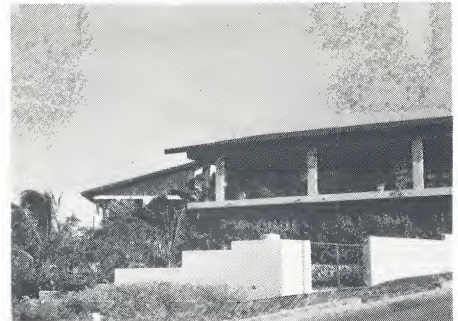


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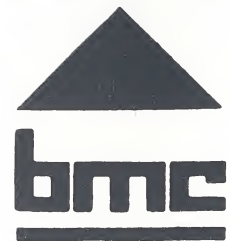
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Untenable situation

At the office for life and family problems

by Joan de Windt

The first thing one notices on entering the building in which the Bureau for Life and Family Problems (Bureau voor Levens en Gezinsmoeilijkheden, or simply called LM) is situated, is its dilapidated state.

A shabby ramshackle building on the outside, with faded, chipping paint. On the inside wallpaper that has lost its grip on the walls, torn, dirty, with spots caused by age and dampness. Amidst all this decay the LM is functioning with only three persons: a pedagogue, a psychologist and a family therapist.

In spite of this lack of manpower, LM is functioning and has in the past year assisted 450 people.

Promise

The Bureau was established in April 1975. Psychologist Edwin R. Lopez Ramirez, one of the founders of LM, was appointed head of office. On the eve of his appointment in March 1975 he declared that LM would have as its objective assisting people, dealing with problems of relational, psychical and emotional kind. In a lecture held for "Forsa Femenina" on March 31st of the same year he also stated that treatment of clients would be achieved in an atmosphere of trust and secrecy. The office would guarantee the confidentiality of all personal facts and files.

Uncertain

Now, seven years later, seated in the ramshackle building, Lopez Ramirez says: "We cannot guaran-

tee our clients any kind of privacy. The situation of this building is such that anyone can obtain access to it".

In the past the building was visited by thieves on more than one occasion and personal files among other things were destroyed. However, it is not only the ruinous building that prevents the functioning of the office in an effective way. At this moment LM finds itself in a very uncertain position. The office is being financed by the Central Government, but in view



Shabby

of overall decentralisation plans it will eventually be transferred to the Island authorities. Whereas this transfer has not taken place yet, there is already a stop on the acquisition of new personnel. Because of this the lack of personnel is not likely to be eliminated.

Sections

Edwin Lopez Ramirez is convinced that there is great need for the services of his office, which are all free

of charge. In the past year help was asked and offered to 450 clients.

The work of LM consists of three sections: prevention, curative help and the development of therapies. Prevention means approaching the public with information in order to prevent problems that could have made themselves felt eventually. In March '81 a "Pedagogical hour" was started. Twice a week parents and children could seek information and guidance on the subjects of raising a child and relationships.

Also an information course for expectant mothers was organised in co-operation with the Maternity Ward Rio Canario and the Gynaecology section of the St. Elisabeth Hospital. In the Maternity Ward they often experience that a lot of mothers have questions about the delivery and taking care of the baby, as well as on their sexuality. The course deals with subjects the client is confronted with. They are shown a film on what happens at the ward from the moment the

patient is taken in up to the moment she leaves for home again.

The Prevention Section (which consists of only one man) has also held an investigation on the topic of homosexuality. The investigation is completed, although the facts accumulated have not yet been published. An investigation on the subject of pregnancy among unwed adolescents is being done.

Accepting invitations to lecture for schools or groups is also part of the prevention work. ♦

Therapy

The Curative Help Section has as its task offering help to those who come to the office to get it. A lot of LM's clients get the advice to visit this office from the police, the Council of Guardians, Social Affairs, the Court of Justice or from doctors. Many people, however, come spontaneously, having heard of the office from acquaintances. The office extends its services to people with problems in their marriage or who have trouble raising their children, which happens especially with adolescents, to people with an alcohol or drug problem, homosexuals who have trouble accepting their own situation, suicidal cases or people suffering from depression.

Most of the clients who come to LM suffer from trouble in their marriages. This tells Lopez Ramirez, is often caused by the fact that the husband is seeing another woman or is beating his wife. A therapist tries to get both partners to come and talk to him and to each other. In weekly one hour sessions he tries to make the partners listen to and understand each other, in order to get to the root of the problem.

For the women who come to LM



E. R. Lopez-Ramirez counseling client

because their husband is having an affair there isn't much hope, if the partner doesn't wish to change his ways.

"These women", says Lopez Ramirez, "can only accept the situation or ask for a divorce" According to him these women know LM cannot really offer a solution to their problem, but they use the office for moral support and to get feedback, a second opinion and to just talk to someone or hear if the decisions they want to make are indeed the right ones.

It is his firm belief that there are some conflicting points of view

that cause trouble in a lot of marriages. "Often one of the partners has an idea of expectation about wedlock that does not coincide with that of his or her partner. Or the husband may want to assume a domineering role in their relationship, whereas the wife wants to be treated as an equal partner".

Lopez Ramirez thinks the time has come to help women become more assertive, in order to be able to cope better in marriage.

Counseling

Another problem for which people visit the LM is trouble which can arise in a relationship between parents and, especially, adolescent children. The pedagogical hour was set up in particular for this kind of problem.

It is very difficult for the LM office to find out if their weekly sessions have had any lasting results, since the clients, once they are finished with the therapy, don't come back to the office and LM makes it a point never to intrude upon the privacy of people's homes. The clients have not shown much interest in follow-ups, which would allow the staff to see if problems have really been solved and remain solved. As Lopez Ramirez puts it, ▶



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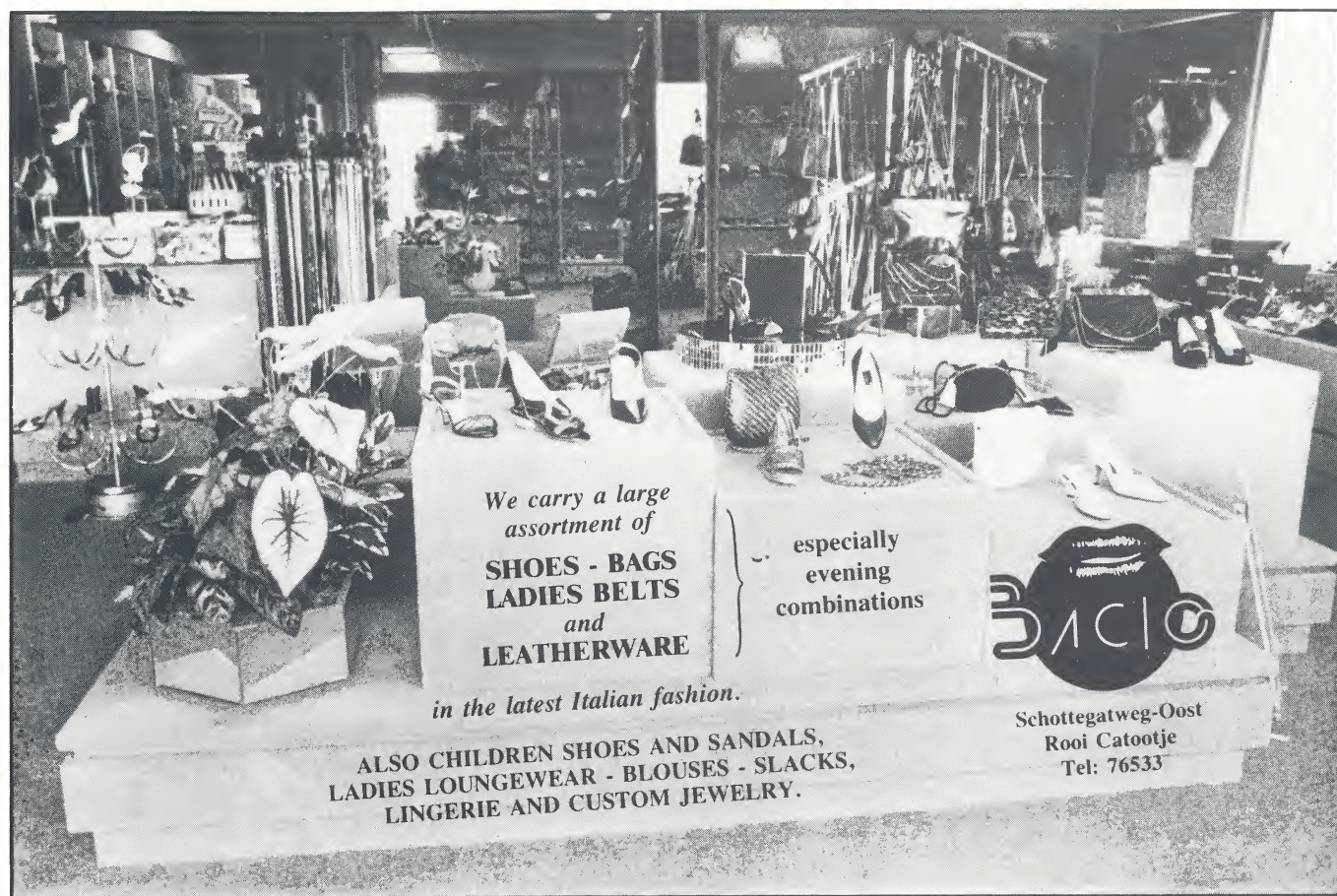
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Gispén OFFICE FURNITURE



ex-clients when met in the streets prefer not to be spoken to, since they do not want outsiders to link them with LM.

He states that people of all social classes make use of the services the office renders. He suspects, however, that the cheerless ruinous sight of the building is keeping some people from asking for help. The section Development of Therapy offers a three year course on counselling and psychotherapy in cooperation with "La Facultad para las Ciencias Sociales Aplicadas" in Puerto Rico. The training programme, in which 8 students participated, is nearing its end. In the months of August and September the final exams on the theoretical part of the course will be held.

Productive

In spite of the fact that the office of LM is situated in an extremely neglected building, and has far too little personnel, they do get a reasonable amount of work done.

This, however, does not mean that they do not endeavour to better

the conditions they have to work in, although up to now all their efforts have been fruitless.

In a letter addressed to the Minister of Welfare on May 9th, 1979, they point out the untenable situation of the office and refer to eight letters that have already been sent. They state that after rainfall the roof of their abode leaks in five different rooms. The floor of the patio has sunk in some spots and its

E. R. Lopez-Ramirez outside building



roof could come down at any moment, endangering their lives. Burglars can enter the building whenever they wish, and valuable items, personal belongings and confidential files, could be taken or destroyed, so privacy cannot be guaranteed to the clients. Because of the buildings' neglected, and therefore easily accessible state, a mentally deranged woman took up her abode in it.

She threatened the personnel that she would stab them with a knife, shock them with electricity and put fire to the building.

In a short time the building was burglarised twice. One part of the missing articles was found in the room of the illegal inhabitant, and on one occasion a fire was started.

The personnel wrote in the letter that these circumstances damaged the working conditions and took away the satisfaction of performing their jobs.

This situation dates from back in 1979. The disturbed woman has disappeared since then, but the state of the building is still such that nothing whatsoever pre- ▶

vents other undesirables to settle permanently in the office.

Creativity Frustrated

The building in which the office is situated belongs to the Government of Curaçao and appears on the list of monuments to be restored. Budgets for the restoration and renovation of the sites must be drawn up by the Head of Office, R. Lopez Ramirez. Projects sent in by him in the past have all been returned. He has now worked out a budget in which the total sum to be spent amounts to 400,000.— guilders. The Government of Curaçao would then have to provide only 100,000.— guilders, this being the 25% the Dutch authorities demand to be invested by the islands submitting a request for financing. No answer has yet been received. Next to their endeavours for decent housing, the staff of LM also wrote a letter to the Minister of Welfare in January of this year, in which they asked his attention for the shortage of manpower and refer to three different appointments made with the Department of Personnel to discuss the problem, and for which nobody showed up.

They state that the lack of personnel stands in the way of LM's ability to function in an efficient and effective manner.

Also, continues the letter, it has a demotivating and demoralising effect on the staff and hinders the realization of creative ideas. They claim that they need a minimum of personnel to attend to daily tasks and that the current state of affairs calls forth irritation and vexation, as the staff has to do more than a reasonable share of work.

Amidst all these worrying and frustrating circumstances the Office for Life and Family Problems continues to do its job, assisting clients with emotional trouble, while severely in need of help itself. Hopefully the Departments concerned, viz. Welfare and Personnel, will come to their rescue, before a part of troubled Curaçao will have nowhere to turn to when seeking help for their problems. ■

by Alice van Romondt

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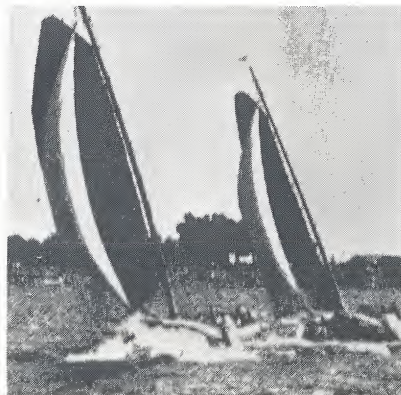
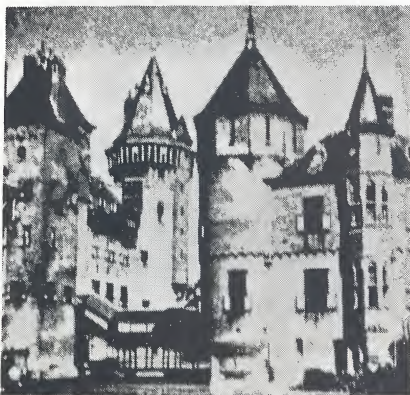


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